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GERMAN VIEWS OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

by

Johann Hindert

June 2015

Thesis Advisor: John Arquilla
Co-Advisor: Kalev Sepp

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Increasingly, so-called weak actors employ irregular warfare to successfully challenge the strong. The British, French, and Americans are recognized for their irregular warfare experience, but the comparatively rich German tradition remains overlooked. German contributions to irregular warfare, in fact, rival their reputed expertise in modern maneuver warfare.

This thesis surveys German irregular warfare cases from the eighteenth century forward. Beginning in the American Revolution, Hessian officer Johann Ewald revealed important counter-insurgency principles. In the early nineteenth century, Carl von Clausewitz spoke to the larger idea of people's war and noted its efficacy. In a peripheral theater of World War I, Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck mastered the art of irregular adaptation and survival. In the Second World War, Otto Skorzeny perfected the strategic commando raid. After serving in the same war, Friedrich A.F. von der Heydte published a theory of modern irregular warfare, unique for its views on terrorism and the combined employment of irregular and other forms of warfare. Otto Heilbrunn studied partisan warfare and endorsed pseudo operations to counter asymmetric threats such as those faced by the United States today. German irregular warfare offers strategic answers to contemporary security challenges.

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GERMAN VIEWS OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

Johann Hindert
Major, United States Army
B.A., Kalamazoo College, 2003

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Author: Johann Hindert

Approved by: John Arquilla
Thesis Advisor

Kalev Sepp
Co-Advisor

John Arquilla
Chair, Department of Defense Analysis

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ABSTRACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Irregular warfare has become the global norm, while conventional state-versus-state conflict has grown rare.[1] This is likely a function of the increasingly large conventional force advantages enjoyed by powerful nations driven by their unprecedented investments in technology and military equipment. Weaker states and non-state actors are forced to adopt unconventional means and strategies to overcome the existing disparity.[2] Groups such as Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State reinforce this notion. Each has frustrated and challenged the United States in recent years. Their military successes against the world's sole recognized super power imply the need for further attention to be given to the study of irregular warfare.

Traditionally, the U.S. military has focused its study of this subject on the British, French, and even its own historical experiences. Lacking in this case is the rich vein of thought to be mined from the German irregular warfare tradition. Most often associated with the rise of modern maneuver warfare, the Germans nevertheless have much to contribute to the more irregular realm of combat. This thesis surveys German irregular warfare in practice and theory from the eighteenth century forward to identify important lessons and themes.

A. WHAT IS IRREGULAR WARFARE?

To begin, the term "irregular warfare" needs to be better understood. According to the U.S. Military Joint Publication 1–02 (2010), irregular warfare constitutes, "A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s)."[3] This definition is vague in its use of the term "violent struggle," which

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[1] Michael T. Klare notes that, of the 50 armed conflicts that broke out in the 1990s, only four entailed conflict between two or more states, and only one—the Persian Gulf War—involved all-out fighting between large numbers of air, ground, and sea forces; Michael T. Klare, "The New Face of Combat: Terrorism and Irregular Warfare in the 21st Century," in *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, ed. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 29.

[2] Christopher Paul, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 188.

[3] Department of Defense. *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (JP 1–02), 2010, 170.

inadequately accounts for the numerous operational and strategic irregular warfare options. The definition is also restrictive in its designated purpose, that being "for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population." Although often the case, this is not always true. For instance, the purpose of the U.S. raid to kill Osama Bin Laden did not conform to the above definition, but can be classified as irregular warfare.

Another U.S. military definition (2006), states that, "irregular warfare has its objective maintaining or undermining the legitimacy of a political authority by the application of indirect approaches and non-conventional means to defeat an enemy by subversion, attrition, or exhaustion rather than direct military confrontation."[4] This more comprehensive and specific definition is better, but still remains too narrow in scope. As author and strategist John Arquilla correctly points out, "Efforts to simplify the concept of irregular warfare have tended to slight the complex elements that are so necessary to a proper understanding of the phenomenon."[5] In other words, it is useful to understand the subject of irregular warfare broadly for that engenders greater understanding and creativity in employment.

Arquilla more aptly gets at the nature of irregular warfare, stating:

> Parity, as existed between the leading states at the outset of World War I in 1914, is rare. In a world of unfair fights, only human creativity allows the chance to take on one's betters with some hope of prevailing. So it is that an innovative turn of mind toward unusual tactics and strategies, arising largely in response to material inferiority, lies at the heart of conflict's area of greatest complexity: irregular warfare.[6]

This description begins by acknowledging what irregular warfare is not, and then distills the nature of irregular warfare down to its fundamental characteristics. Importantly, it acknowledges the idea of unfair fights, or situations where one combatant

---

[4] J. N. Mattis and Eric T. Olson, "Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare. Version 2.0" (U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Command and U.S. Special Operations Command Center for Knowledge and Futures, 2006), 5.

[5] John Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World* (Chicago : [Lanham, Md.]: Ivan R. Dee ; Distributed by National Book Network, 2011), 7.

[6] Ibid., 3.

suffers significant resource, capability, or other structural combat disadvantages in comparison to its adversary.

German irregular-warfare strategist, Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte, advances a step further in specificity:

> Usually irregular warfare is conceived to be an armed conflict, in which the parties are not large units, but small and very small action-groups, and in which the outcome is not decided in a few large battles, but the decision is sought, and ultimately achieved, in a very large number of small, individual operations, robberies, acts of terrorism and sabotage, bombings and other attacks. Irregular warfare is "war out of the dark." In place of the powerful thrust, there is a multiplicity of no less dangerous pin-pricks; instead of superiority of weapons—and therefore firepower in the broadest sense—there is the superiority of movement, which the enemy is no longer able to pursue.[7]

Von der Heydte's informal, yet effective, definition of irregular warfare highlights the following key characteristics: action by small groups, the cumulative effect of unconventional and small operations over time, and a priority toward freedom of movement and stealth. To elaborate further, irregular warfare operations may include, or be associated with: insurgencies and counter-insurgencies, unconventional warfare, revolutions, commando raids, terrorism, kidnappings, subversion, and sabotage. These examples, combined with Arquilla's conceptual view and von der Heydte's more practical definition, establish a basic understanding and departure point for deeper research into the German experience.

B. THE GERMANIC PERSPECTIVE

The Germanic peoples are well known for their militaristic history and orientation. Dating back to the time of Caesar's Gallic Wars in the first century B.C., Germans enjoyed a strong military reputation. At that time, the contemporary German state consisted of various loosely affiliated Germanic tribes such as the Cimbri, Suebi, Teutoni, and Harudes. According to Caesar, under the leadership of Ariovistus, these tribes excelled in combined cavalry-infantry operations during frequent raids into

[7] Friedrich August Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare: In Defense Policy and as a Military Phenomenon*, 1st English ed. (New York, NY: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1986), 3–4.

neighboring Gaul. They developed a reputation for bravery, weapon skills, and savagery, and they benefited from an ability and willingness to sustain longer campaigns than their enemies.[8]

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, three German military leaders are credited with developing many of the principles still applied to conventional warfare today. Frederick the Great (1712–1786) ruled Prussia for 46 years, during which he strengthened Prussia's position through hard-won victory in the Seven Years' War. He also devised many significant tactical advances. Prussian general and theorist Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831) wrote *On War*, which is perhaps the single most influential book ever written on military theory and strategy. Finally, Helmuth von Moltke the Elder (1800–1891) served as Chief of Staff of the Prussian Army for 30 years. In this capacity, he contributed lasting theoretical advances in the subjects of military planning, logistics, and leadership.

More recently, German military history includes the heinous acts committed during the period of the Third Reich under Adolf Hitler. Many of Hitler's conventional force commanders, however, such as Heinz Guderian and Erwin Rommel, are praised today for their operational and tactical expertise. Meanwhile, other leaders in the Nazi organization proved to be masters of the irregular warfare realm. The Nazi propaganda minister Paul Joseph Goebbels and Nazi Waffen-SS commander Otto Skorzeny were both recognized for their expertise in political warfare and commando operations respectively.

In addition to conventional war theory, German history is rich with irregular warfare strategic thinkers and practitioners, but they are comparatively lesser known in the broader study of the subject. This thesis conducts a survey of German irregular warfare literature and history from the eighteenth century forward.[9] It draws on memoirs, historical accounts, and theoretical analyses from multiple eras and conflicts, including

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[8] Julius Caesar, *Seven Commentaries on the Gallic War*, The World's Classics (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23–34.

[9] This thesis is not a comprehensive survey of German irregular warfare practitioners and theorists, but rather is limited to those predominantly accessible in the English language at this time.

the American Revolution, the Napoleonic Era, the World Wars, and the Cold War to identify German irregular warfare trends and strategic concepts. The thesis concludes with a summary of German irregular warfare strategic ideas of importance and recommendations for current and future application.

C. GERMAN IRREGULAR WARRIORS SURVEYED

This thesis will survey key German irregular warfare practitioners and theoreticians. In chronological and chapter order they are: Johann Ewald (1744–1813), Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck (1870–1964), Otto Skorzeny (1908–1975), Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte (1907–1994), Otto Heilbrunn (1906–1969). Each case is briefly introduced below.

1. Johann Ewald (1744–1813)

Hessian military officer, Johann Ewald, maintained a journal during his service under British contract in the American Revolution (1775–1783). This extensive journal, later published under the title *Diary of the American War*, served as a source for Ewald's subsequent publication, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*. Ewald's appreciation for irregular tactics, writing talent, and first–hand experience in the "American War" make his books worthwhile and still relevant to students of irregular warfare.

Before the "American War," Ewald served in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), and later he closely observed much of the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815). His military experiences occurred during the end of the Age of Absolutism[10] in Europe when, from a military perspective, cavalry were generally considered more valuable than light infantry, or what Ewald termed "jägers" from the German word for hunters. Not only did Ewald witness "American jägers" succeed against the British Army, but he also noted how Russian partisans picked away at Napoleon's massive conventional army in 1812. The principles put forth by Ewald range from the tactical to strategic levels.

[10] The Age of Absolutism refers to a period when absolute monarchs controlled much of Europe and is commonly considered to have ended with the French Revolution in 1789.

2. Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831)

Contrary to common perception, Carl von Clausewitz did contribute to irregular warfare strategic thought. In Book VI of his seminal work, *On War*, Clausewitz specifically addressed small wars, otherwise known as war of the people, insurgency, or partisan warfare. He described the conditions under which a people's war can be effective and went on to discuss other aspects such as partisan and conventional force interdependence.[11] Additionally, Clausewitz is known to have lectured on small wars in 1811 and 1812 at the German *Kriegs Universität*. English translations of these lectures are currently pending; however, the primary translator, Christopher Daase, has published a paper in English summarizing their content.[12] A closer look at Clausewitz's writing and lectures is likely to identify principles beyond his comparatively familiar thoughts on conventional war and politics.

3. Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck (1870–1964)

Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck served as a General in the Imperial German Army on the African sub-continent prior to and during WWI.[13] From 1914–1918, von Lettow led a local, German East African Askari force against the invading British. Although the British and their indigenous African troops enjoyed manpower and resource superiority, von Lettow orchestrated an ingenious irregular warfare campaign with strategic effects on the greater events of World War I. In addition to other accounts, von Lettow himself maintained a clear written record of his experiences in German East Africa. This memoir provides detailed first-hand accounts that include area assessments, tactical-to-strategic decision-making, event descriptions, and a mastery of the human domain, all in clear, concise prose. Von Lettow's account, by itself, stands as a groundbreaking textbook for the student of irregular warfare. Other literature about his campaign will also be

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[11] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1976), 479–483.

[12] Christopher Daase, *Clausewitz and Small Wars*, Oxford University Conference "Clausewitz in the 21st Century," 21–23 March 2005.

[13] Von Lettow arrived in German East Africa as an *Oberstleutnant* [Lieutenant Colonel], and was later promoted. Byron Farwell, *The Great War in Africa* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 105.

examined, to include a parallel first-hand account from the senior British intelligence officer of the campaign, Major Richard Meinertzhagen.

4. Otto Skorzeny (1908–1975)

World War II Germany produced one of the most effective and feared irregular warriors of recent times. Best known for his leadership role in the rescue of Benito Mussolini, German Waffen-SS and Amt VI-S commander, Otto Skorzeny, perfected a cornerstone operation of irregular warfare—the strategic commando raid. In September of 1943, under direct orders from Adolf Hitler, Skorzeny successfully rescued Mussolini after the Italian leader had been overthrown and imprisoned by the Italian government, nearly resulting in the loss of Germany's primary European ally. Skorzeny's effort not only produced technical and tactical innovations, but also had important strategic impact for Germany's greater war effort, namely national morale boost and resurrection of a key alliance.

Commonly referred to as, "the most dangerous man in Europe," Otto Skorzeny led multiple other irregular warfare operations.[14] Most notably, he executed a kidnapping of the son of Hungarian leader Miklos Horthy de Nagybana and follow-on seizure of the Hungarian citadel; thereby forcing Hungary's head of state to resign and ensuring the retention of Hungarian loyalty in the face of Soviet overtures for cooperation.[15] Beyond the sheer magnitude of Skorzeny's commando operations, however, is the importance of the study of the person himself; namely those unique characteristics that made him such an effective irregular warrior.

5. Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte (1907–1994)

Friedrich A.F. von der Heydte served as a German officer in World War II, after which he built a distinguished career in the German Bundeswehr. During World War II he served as a battalion commander in the German airborne invasion of Crete, the first-

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[14]Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 452.

[15] William H. McRaven, Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 166.

ever divisional-size airborne invasion. Much of his later life was closely tied to academia, during which he published *Modern Irregular Warfare: In Defense Policy and as a Military Phenomenon* (1972). This book contributes significant ideas to irregular warfare in the Cold War era from someone competent in both irregular warfare practice and theory.[16]

In an interview 14 years after the publishing of his book, von der Heydte provided some insight into his interest in irregular warfare and demonstrated how his writing from a decade earlier had increased in relevance based on events within Germany and the West. He explained that his ardent interest in irregular warfare partially stemmed from family ties, claiming a distant cousin served as a French officer at Dien Bien Phu, and a great uncle who helped the Austro–Hungarian Empire put down the Hungarian Revolution of 1848–49. He further addressed such topics as the American irregular warfare experience contrasted with the French irregular warfare experience in Vietnam, the history of Soviet and French partisan warfare, the inherent weaknesses of constitutional republics, terrorism (green or anti-nuclear/anti-industrial) and Soviet influence, and even the security of the apartheid regime in South Africa.[17] Clearly, this military author and theoretician had much to offer in the realm of irregular warfare.

6. Otto Heilbrunn (1906–1969)

Otto Heilbrunn was a German author and military theorist who wrote in the wake of WWII with an eye on the future and an interest in applying lessons from the recent past. In their book, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (1954), Heilbrunn and co-author C. A. Dixon described the tactics, organization, and doctrine of Soviet guerrilla groups that targeted the German military in WWII.[18] This book also reviewed the German military's counter-guerrilla strategy, focusing on the German Organization for Anti-partisan

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[16] Friedrich August Heydte, Modern Irregular Warfare: In Defense Policy and as a Military Phenomenon, 1st English ed. (New York, NY: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1986).

[17] Ibid., xiv–xxxiii.

[18] Aubrey Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn. *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954).

Warfare, its tactics, exploits, and a general assessment of effectiveness. The book concluded with a blueprint for future anti-guerrilla operations.

Heilbrunn's second book, *Partisan Warfare* (1962), was a comprehensive review of partisan strategy, operations, and tactics in light of multitude case studies.[19] Russian partisan history remained of prime importance, but other examples such as Mao Tse-Tung's communist guerrilla war and the First Indochina War (1946–1954) received substantial attention as well. Heilbrunn spoke directly to the importance of coordination between partisans and the regular army, the role of air power in partisan war, partisan roles in nuclear war, and offensive anti-partisan operations

Heilbrunn's third book, *Warfare in the Enemy's Rear* (1963), was a broader review of irregular warfare based on multiple case studies from around the world.[20] Topics addressed include partisan task and purpose, conventional force task and purpose when aligned with partisans, differences between rear and forward operations, and control structure within irregular units. Heilbrunn concluded with a chapter related to irregular warfare and the nuclear age and an appendix dedicated to the training notes of the famed English irregular warrior, Major General Orde Wingate. Heilbrunn also published numerous articles in English.

The intent of this thesis is to identify what German strategic thought and practice, based on the surveyed cases, contribute to our understanding of irregular warfare. More specifically, this thesis will determine what these cases illuminate regarding German irregular warfare campaign strategy; what operational and intellectual trends exist within German strategic thought about irregular warfare; and the German track record with regard to irregular warfare. Is the German approach to irregular warfare unique? If so, how? Can German irregular warfare principles, lessons, or insights be applied to U.S. military education and/or strategy and how? Finally, what is the significance of German strategic thought about irregular warfare, and why has it been seemingly overlooked? The answers to these questions will be presented in the thesis conclusion.

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[19] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962).

[20] Otto Heilbrunn. *Warfare in the Enemy's Rear* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963).

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II. JOHANN EWALD: DIARIST OF IRREGULAR WAR

The first case study in this survey of German irregular warfare is rooted in American history. Captain Johann Ewald (Figure 1) was a Hessian officer who fought under British contract in the American Revolution (1776–1783).[21] During this war, Ewald maintained a diary, later published under the title *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*.[22] Ewald's diary spanned eight years (1776–1784) and contained detailed, first-hand accounts of his experiences as commander of a Hessian jäger company.[23] In this capacity, he participated in every major battle, from White Plains, New York in October 1776, to the British surrender at Yorktown, Virginia in October 1781, as well as in many smaller engagements of the American Revolution.[24]

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[21] "England did not have a sufficient army for the American War. . . . Of the estimated 29,867 German troops sent to America, 16,992 were from Hesse-Cassel, 5,723 from Brunswick, 2,422 from Hesse-Hanau, 2,353 from Anspach-Bayreuth, 1,225 from Waldeck, and 1,152 from Anhalt-Zerbst. In the rebellious colonies all these German troops were indiscriminately termed 'Hessians,' just as all German immigrants were formerly called 'Palatines.'" Joseph Tustin, "Preface and Introduction," *in Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, by Johann Ewald (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xix.

[22] Three of four volumes of Ewald's diary were only discovered by chance by an American military officer (Joseph Philips Tustin) on assignment in Germany in 1948. After a long but successful search for the fourth volume, Tustin published the entire diary in English in 1979. Joseph Tustin, "Preface and Introduction," *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xiii-xvi.

[23] Jägers were Hessian elite troops, drawn from hunters and foresters for their shooting and tracking expertise. They conducted dismounted and mounted operations and were equipped with rifled guns as compared to the more common, and less accurate, smooth bore muskets of the time. Jägers also carried hunting swords for close combat, as opposed to bayonets. In contrast to the British Redcoats, Hessian jägers, "wore green coats with carmine collars, cuffs, and lapels, with green vests trimmed with gold." Therefore, jägers more effectively blended in with their terrain than their "Redcoat" counterparts and were generally feared for their shooting accuracy and aggression. Jägers performed key tasks primarily in support of larger infantry and cavalry formations and operations. These tasks included: reconnaissance; reconnaissance security; ambuscades (ambushes); advance, rear, and flank guard; early warning; partisan operations; and raids. Joseph Tustin, "Preface and Introduction," *in Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, by Johann Ewald (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xxi.

[24] Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press), 1.

Figure 1. Johann Ewald

The value in Ewald's diary is twofold. Not only did he personally bear witness to many watershed events of the war, but he also demonstrated objectivity in analysis and an understanding of the irregular warfare challenges at hand. Ewald's insights into the principles of irregular warfare accompany other highpoints within the diary, including his perspective on General George Washington's famous crossing of the Delaware River and victory at Trenton, New Jersey (1776); a second-hand account of the Wyoming Massacre (1778); an extensive description of the siege of Charleston (1780) from the British perspective; and a detailed description of the American siege on Yorktown (1781). He recounted various skirmishes, battles, and ambushes; and included critiques of British strategy and leadership; assessments of American tactics; personal letters from British Generals Sir William Howe and Charles Cornwallis to himself; his private thoughts on, and interactions with, Benedict Arnold; as well as a description of the American fort at West Point following the end of the war.[25]

[25] According to Ewald, he wrote his diary notes each evening while others rested, thus ensuring a more accurate account of the day's events. Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 3.

Shortly after his return to Europe, Ewald wrote and published a book titled *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, largely based on his combat experiences in America.[26] Ewald's treatise was designed to serve as a guide for the leader of a small infantry or combined infantry-cavalry unit. It prescribed tactics and principles for conducting operations in the American environment, and included recommendations for light infantry recruiting and equipment, patrolling, outpost selection, fortification occupation and defense, reconnaissance, ambushes, and retreats. Although the treatise shares many similarities with the U.S. Army Ranger Handbook, it also serves as an irregular warfare guide.[27] Ewald's diary and treatise, in combination, reveal important irregular warfare principles that remain applicable today.

A. EWALD'S TREATISE IN CONTEXT

The context of the time significantly shaped Ewald's ideas on irregular war. During the Middle Ages (fifth to fifteenth centuries), the distinction between regular and irregular warfare was blurred in Europe, but by the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) the distinction had become stark.[28] Monarchical, nation-state armies in eighteenth century Europe epitomized the extremes of conventional warfare, typified by a "professionalization" of the military.[29] In an effort to ensure their own survival from internal and external threats, absolutist rulers built standing, conventional armies. While officers were recruited from the noble elites as a means to bind their loyalty to the state, soldiers generally came from the dregs of society and were pressed into service. This

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[26] Ewald's primary goal for his publication was the education of his fellow officers. Of note, 25 years after its publication, Carl von Clausewitz, in his *Vorlesungen über den Kleinen* Krieg (1810–1811), still recommended the text to his students. Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 3.

[27] The *U.S. Army Ranger Handbook*, SH 21–76, is commonly recognized as the U.S. Army's premier guide for light infantry patrol operations. Its legacy and content is traced back to lessons learned and documented by Major Robert Rogers, whose ranger unit fought for the British in North America during the French and Indian War (1754–1763).

[28] Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*, 1st ed. (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 59.

[29] Ibid., 59–60.

resulted in expensive army formations that offered limited combat capability beyond organized fighting in open terrain.[30]

Soon, partisan forces emerged in the contested regions of the European powers, such as the Austro–Hungarian and Russian empires.[31] In their attempts to challenge the prevailing European powers, the partisans also revealed the susceptibility of the professional European armies to irregular threats. In response, states like Prussia and Austria established their own irregular forces capable of conducting "small war"-type operations, but the general opinion of irregular troops in Europe remained low. Because these troops were commonly considered bandits, little serious strategic thought was given to their unique, irregular warfare skill.[32]

Across the Atlantic Ocean, an almost parallel rise in irregular warfare was taking place out of necessity—this one heavily influenced by frontier terrain and Native American fighting styles. During the French and Indian War (1754–1763) and other frontier conflicts, American colonists learned irregular warfare tactics that would transfer well when confronting the British army in the American Revolution. For the colonists, success in the "American War" depended on maintaining the psychological support of the people and forcing the British to wage war on the rebels' terms.[33] Colonists successfully blended the actions of regular light troops and those of the more irregular militias, and

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[30] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 9.

[31] "The 'Military Dictionary' attached to the second volume of the 1735 translation of Antoine de Pas, Marquis de Feuquieres, *Memoirs Historical and Military*, defined a partisan as 'a Person who is very dexterous in commanding a Party, and knows the Country very well; he is employed in surprising the Enemy Convoys, or in getting Intelligence.'" Other definitions of partisan share certain characteristics such as political motivations, reconnaissance roles, and light troop composition. Examples of early partisan forces include the Pandurs and Cossacks from the area of southeastern Europe that is currently the Ukraine. Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press), 5–12.

[32] Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 12–16.

[33] Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 23.

Ewald took note.[34] His observations while in America and ideas on irregular warfare would prove accurate and prescient as he described in detail a type of warfare yet to be fully defined and/or appreciated. Even following British defeat in 1783, European leaders still refused to accept the lessons documented by Ewald.[35]

B. APPLIED PRINCIPLES

This chapter describes the irregular warfare principles that can be gleaned from Ewald's diary and treatise. These are: adaptation; positive relations with the local population; discipline; initiative and opportunism; and respect for the enemy. Each principle will be explored through Ewald's first-hand experiences and ideas.

Ewald's combat experience did not begin in America. Beginning in 1760, Ewald served in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), fighting with German troops against the French. Ewald was wounded in the knee by a musket ball in this war. Later, in 1770, Ewald lost his left eye as a result of a drunken duel. Following a long recovery, he attended school at the Collegium Carolinum, where he studied military science and economics and published his first military treatise, *Gedanken eines hessishen Officiers über das, was man bey Führung eines Detaschements im Felde zu thun hat* [Thoughts of a Hessian Officer About What He Has to Do When Leading a Detachment in the Field]. In 1774, then Captain Ewald began serving in the Liebjäger Corps, where he remained until beginning his contract as one of two jäger company commanders fighting for the British against the rebellious American colonists.[36]

1. Fight Lean

One of the primary reasons for Britain's defeat by the American colonists, according to Ewald, "was that the British officer was not willing to adapt his way of life

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[34] Ibid., 24.

[35] Frederick the Great was one of many European leaders who neither appreciated irregular soldiers, nor the greater potential of irregular warfare. Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 28.

[36] Joseph Tustin, "Preface and Introduction," *in Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, by Johann Ewald (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xxv–xxvi.

or his style of fighting to the new environment."[37] Although the British army benefited from resource abundance, its excesses also hindered its operational success. On June 21, 1781, Ewald expressed his disgust for these excesses, which included multiple African-American slaves and horses assigned to officers down to the lowest levels, stating, "The Army appeared similar to a wandering Arabian or Tartar horde. . . . Any place this horde approached was eaten clean, like an acre invaded by a swarm of locusts. . . . I wondered as much about the indulgent character of Lord Cornwallis as I admired him for his military abilities."[38] British dependence upon luxuries during the war contrasted sharply with the Continental Army's lack of resources, resulting in Ewald's assessment that he "did not think there was an army in the world that could be maintained as cheaply as the American."[39] Ironically, the opposite stands true today.

2. Blend In

Unlike their British counterparts, Ewald's jägers also adapted their dress to the wooded American environment. Instead of red coats, the jägers wore green coats and vests to better blend with their terrain—a common-sense decision grounded in their hunting heritage.[40] Following battles, Ewald often surveyed enemy clothing, weaponry, and equipment in the interest of learning ways to improve those of his own unit. The jägers would even go so far as to adjust their uniforms to look similar to or even match those of their American enemies—an important feature of pseudo operations.[41]

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[37] Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 21.

[38] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 305–306.

[39] Ibid., 354.

[40] Joseph Tustin, "Preface and Introduction," *in Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, by Johann Ewald (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xxi.

[41] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 314.

3. Adapt Operations

In his treatise, Ewald also recommended operational adaptations. These included operating as much as possible during the night as opposed to the day, ensuring maximum unit readiness during hours of darkness, and intimately learning the terrain around him.[42] Ewald also advised against allowing comfort to take precedence over security. For instance, when first occupying a post thought to be far from the enemy, Ewald warned, "One comforts himself with the thought, impermissible in war, that this [caution] is unnecessary here, this is a good post, the enemy is far away from us. Yet often these words have barely been spoken when the punishment for such carelessness is right there."[43]

4. Make Friends

According to Ewald, the British also failed to adapt culturally. Although Lord Cornwallis promoted a sympathetic and population-centric approach in the American South, his subordinate leaders, such as Banastre Tarleton, notoriously terrorized the locals. Stories of rape, pillage, and plunder quickly spread and galvanized popular resistance against the British.[44] Ewald, on the other hand, for reasons both genuine and practical, strove to establish good relations with the local population. He prioritized efforts to question locals, hear their grievances, and treat them fairly—actions that gained Ewald respect and tangible benefits as exemplified by the following statement, made to Ewald by a rebel sympathizer: [45]

> My friend, I confess to you that I am a friend of the States and no friend of the English government, but you have rendered me a friendly turn. You have showed me that humanity which each soldier should not lose sight of. You have protected my property. I will show you that I am grateful. You stand in a corps which is hourly threatened by the danger of the first

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[42] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 75, 87, 88.

[43] Ibid., 81.

[44] Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*, 1st ed. (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 71.

[45] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 119 and 217.

> attack when the enemy approaches. Friend, God bless your person! The success of your arms I cannot wish.—Friend! General Washington has marched up to Norriton today!—Adieu! Adieu![46]

Conversely, Ewald also acknowledged the challenges related to the population that he faced, stating, "Since the entire countryside was devoted to him [Washington], no person except this honest man would let us know it. We could not learn much from our patrols because they were constantly betrayed by the country people and attacked, and did not dare to venture farther than they could get support."[47]

5. Use Locals

In his treatise, Ewald emphasized the benefits of good relationships with the local population. In multiple chapters, he encouraged employing local guides and spies and maintaining frequent communication with prominent local village leaders.[48] When patrolling, Ewald advised not to "simply pass villages and people, but send them to the patrol leader for questioning and spy potential."[49] In the defense of a town or fortification, Ewald recognized that locals could provide intelligence on secret passages, infiltration routes, and patterns of life.[50]

Ewald also employed the local population for discreet early warning. In one example, he convinced a man, whose house could be seen from afar due to its prominent hilltop position, to hang clothes to dry from a point on the rooftop whenever "enemy parties were in the vicinity of his house."[51] Ewald's trust in, and ability to leverage, this person to provide an outer layer of security enabled a decrease in his own unit's security tasks, thus increasing its operational capacity.

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[46] Ibid., 92. Long afterward, Ewald would refrain from naming this informant when reciting this story, but said the man warned Ewald, "'My friend, be on your guard tonight and tomorrow'" (Ibid., 395).

[47] Ibid., 93.

[48] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 76, 77, 85, 91–93.

[49] Ibid., 77.

[50] Ibid., 91–93.

[51] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) 140–142.

6. Stay Sharp

Ewald prioritized good order and discipline, particularly as it related to treatment of the local population. He described multiple instances in his diary of swift and effective discipline enforcement, and in Chapter Two of his treatise, Ewald stated, "Instill strict discipline, especially regarding treatment of the population."[52] As a warning to those who may dismiss his advice, Ewald explained:

> If you want to throw in the weak objection here that the soldier could also do a lot out of love for his officer, I will laugh at that and assure you that the love of a German soldier is nothing but a shadow and worth nothing if he is not kept in the strictest discipline, and that officer who is called a good officer by the soldier is certainly nothing more than what the French call a *honnete homme* [honest man].[53]

Senior officers from both sides of the war recognized the discipline of the Hessians, as shown by General Washington's statement: "One thing I must remark in favor of the Hessians, and that is, that our people who have been prisoners generally agree they received much kinder treatment from them than from British officers and soldiers."[54]

7. Attack

Another principle that clearly emerges from Ewald's writing is that attack is the best defense.[55] Initiative and opportunism are at the heart of this statement and can be viewed on multiple levels. Ewald witnessed how the unrelenting use of ambush and surprise enabled the Americans to victimize and wear down a stronger British army. Specifically, he stated, "The Americans are very skillful in placing such small ambushes for their own safety in front of their outposts which has cost many an Englishman or

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[52] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 69.

[53] Ibid., 126–127.

[54] George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington*, edited by Jared Sparks, 12 vols. (Boston, 1858), IV, 309.

[55] Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs, "A Note on the Translation and Introductory Essay," *in Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, by Johann Ewald, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 22.

German his life or his freedom."[56] To counter this, Ewald proposed the execution of attack and ambush in different scenarios. When patrolling, he said, "If you must become engaged then attack first and hard, because he who attacks first has the victory already half in hands and fortune is usually on the side of the most decisive and courageous."[57] Ewald also recommended employing hasty ambushes based on sudden intelligence of enemy approach or movement along a route.[58] He later devoted a whole chapter in his treatise to ambushes, including baited ambush techniques.[59]

8. Turn Defense Into Offense

Ewald sought the initiative while on the defensive. According to Ewald, "In general, if the partisan is familiar with the area through which he retreats, and if, in addition, he has that kind of knowledge which such an officer has to have, he has to remain a danger to the enemy even in a retreat and can delay the pursuit by the enemy for days"[60]—this, says the jäger, can only occur if one understands his terrain.[61]

9. Look for Opportunity

Ewald also saw opportunity following the end of the war. In 1783, upon hearing the high levels of discontent with Congress among the local population in New York, Ewald commented, "if the English were willing to squander large sums of money among these people they could easily cause fresh unrest in this new state, by which it would be quite possible to turn a part of these provinces to the British side again."[62] Here, Ewald envisioned the employment of unconventional warfare before the term's existence as a means through which to disrupt the new American state.

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[56] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 86.

[57] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 79.

[58] Ibid., 182.

[59] Ibid., 118–119.

[60] Ibid., 123.

[61] Ibid., 122.

[62] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 356.

10. Keep Your Enemies Close

Ewald also emphasized that initiative can be had by maintaining proximity to one's enemy. "Circumstances permitting, it is best to place one's posts as close to the enemy as possible. A soldier who can see the enemy will be twice as much on his guard and does everything willingly, and if the enemy be careless at any given moment one can quickly deal him a blow," according to Ewald.[63] Thus, by virtue of proximity to the enemy, one retains a natural caution, initiative, and opportunity, all of which tend to decrease with distance.

11. Never Underestimate

Finally, Ewald consistently demonstrated a healthy respect for his foe—an important trait that is often overlooked, but tends to routinely occur when one force, in this case the British, enjoys resource, manpower, and/or technological advantages over its enemy. "On the whole, it is safe to say that never in this world was an army as well paid as this [British] one during the civil war in America," said Ewald.[64] Yet, time and again Ewald noted British shortcomings and American achievements. On December 29, 1776, Ewald expressed his frustration with British leadership's underestimation of its American enemy, resulting in a failure to conduct adequate security patrols in the area of General Washington's famous crossing of the Delaware River. Ewald concluded, "Thus the fate of entire kingdoms often depends upon a few blockheads and irresolute men."[65] And further, "On every occasion during this war, one can observe the thoughtlessness, negligence, and contempt of the English toward their foe."[66]

In reference to the Americans, Ewald observed:

> With what soldiers in the world could one do what was done by these men, who go about half naked and in the greatest privation? Deny the best

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[63] Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 87.

[64] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) 118.

[65] Ibid., 45.

[66] Ibid., 183.

> disciplined soldiers of Europe what is due them and they will run away in droves, and the general will soon be alone. But from this one can perceive what an enthusiasm—which these poor fellows call 'Liberty'—can do!.... Who would have thought a hundred years ago that out of this multitude of rabble would arise a people who could defy kings and enter into a close alliance with crowned heads?[67]

Ewald also frequently admired the tactical expertise, toughness, and weapons of his irregular foes.[68] In a counter-insurgency environment, the insurgent's capability, will, and resourcefulness are commonly underestimated, but Ewald did not succumb to this trap—something that contributed to his battlefield successes.

12. Keep Learning

Ewald was a student of warfare. He demonstrated a keen interest in professional learning, reading, and improvement through experience, as clearly revealed in this December 2, 1776 diary passage:

> For the love of justice and in praise of this nation, I must admit that when we examined a haversack of the enemy, which contained only two shirts, we also found the most excellent military books translated into their language. For example, Turpin, Jenny, Grandmaison, La Croix, Tielke's *Field Engineer*, and the *Instructions* of the great Frederick to his generals I have found more than one hundred times. Moreover, several among their officers had designed excellent small handbooks and distributed them in the army. Upon finding these books, I have exhorted our gentlemen many times to read and emulate these people, who only two years before were hunters, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, tradesmen, innkeepers, shoemakers, and tailors.[69]

As a military professional, Ewald felt obligated to pass on the warfare lessons that he had learned. Nested in these lessons are the above described irregular warfare

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[67] Ibid., 340–341. Ewald reiterated, "I became totally lost in my meditations as I tried to imagine the American army in its wretched condition, such as we had often encountered it during the year 1776 and chased it from hill to hill. . .This, too, is a part of that 'Liberty and Independence' for which these poor fellows had to have their arms and legs smashed.—But to what cannot enthusiasm lead a people!" Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) 354–355.

[68] Ibid., 145, 340–341. And, Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Contributions in Military Studies, no. 116 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 86.

[69] Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 108.

principles. Although many of the respected European military leaders of Ewald's time did not appreciate the value of these principles, history has proved, and continues to prove, their worth. Ewald's legacy as an early German irregular warfare practitioner and theorist was enduring. His irregular warfare principles reemerged in the writings of later German military theorists and practitioners.

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III. CARL VON CLAUSEWITZ

It may be argued that Carl von Clausewitz (Figure 2) is the most preeminent military theorist of all time. A short review of his life reveals an impressive military and intellectual background, which formed the foundation of his written work. Clausewitz served in the Prussian Army as France evolved from revolutionary state into the most dominant land power on the European continent. Fueled by mass conscription and the skillful leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), France's increased military might was equally matched by its political and territorial ambitions.[70]

Figure 2. Carl von Clausewitz

A. PERSONAL HISTORY

All of Clausewitz's military experiences occurred in the context of Prussian battles against France, with a brief stint as a staff officer in the Russian Army in 1812.[71]

[70] Peter Paret, "The Genesis of *On War*," in *On War*, by Carl von Clausewitz, Trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 9–10.

[71] Ibid., 18.

Clausewitz first served in combat as a twelve-year-old lance corporal in 1793.[72] From 1801 to 1803, Clausewitz attended the Prussian War College where he began an influential relationship with his long-term mentor and senior Prussian army officer Gerhard von Scharnhorst (1755–1813).[73] In 1806, Clausewitz again fought against France as an infantryman in a grenadier battalion before his unit was forced to surrender.[74] As a Russian army staff officer in 1812, Clausewitz developed a plan to organize the East Prussian militia. Next, Clausewitz became chief of staff of a small international army that covered the Baltic flank of the Allies against French aggression. Soon thereafter, Clausewitz gained readmission to the Prussian service.[75] In 1818, Clausewitz became Superintendent of the Prussian War Academy in Berlin. Much of his writing from this point forward would serve as the basis for his seminal book *On War*.[76] Shortly before his death in 1831, Clausewitz was transferred to the Prussian Army's artillery inspectorate. Like many others at this time, it is believed that Clausewitz died of complications from cholera.[77]

B. HISTORICAL INFLUENCES

Clausewitz was a student of history. He valued the specific details of individual battles and campaigns over more general military historical knowledge.[78] Clausewitz wrote increasingly and prolifically throughout his life on a range of subjects from the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war to historical analyses. Ultimately, he is recognized for developing his own unique and comprehensive theory of war, as described in *On War*.[79] Clausewitz's writing was also heavily influenced by eighteenth and nineteenth century German and French philosophers, such as Immanuel Kant, Georg

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[72] Ibid., 5.

[73] Ibid., 8.

[74] Ibid., 13.

[75] Ibid., 18.

[76] Ibid., 19.

[77] Peter Paret, "The Genesis of *On War*," in *On War*, by Carl von Clausewitz, Trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 24.

[78] Ibid., 24.

[79] Ibid., 20.

Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu.[80]

Clausewitz is most often cited for his ideas on war and politics, especially that war is an extension of politics. The war of which Clausewitz wrote is commonly understood as regular combat representative of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe.[81] Contrary to general opinion, Clausewitz also recognized and contributed important ideas to the understanding of irregular warfare. In Book VI, chapter XXVI of *On War*, Clausewitz addressed the topic of people's war, which he inaccurately described as a phenomenon of the nineteenth century.[82]

C. LESSONS FROM CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Clausewitz's ideas on irregular warfare were informed by key political-military events of his time. According to Clausewitz scholar and writer Christopher Daase, Clausewitz's ideas sprang from his study of the rebellion in the Vendee (1793–1796), the

[80] Ibid., 15.

[81] In this case, "regular" denotes military forces subordinate to a sovereign and internationally recognized state. Common uniforms, legal recognition, and adherence to European tactical standards of fighting characterized these forces. "Irregular" forces, on the other hand, fell outside of such characterizations and state subordination.

[82] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 457. Book VI, Chapter XXVI, titled "Arming the Nation," represents less than one percent of the entire book *On War*, so it is understandable that the casual reader and student of Clausewitz is often unaware of his ideas on irregular warfare. The term "people's war," in this case, describes specific types of irregular warfare, notably insurrection, resistance, and partisan operations. Of note, this edition of *On War* uses "Karl" instead of "Carl."

Tyrolean uprising (1809), and the Spanish insurrection and Peninsula War (1808–1814).[83]

1. The French Insurrection

Following the French Revolution (1789), France faced internal rebellions against newly institutionalized national policies. In the Vendee, local citizens took up arms in militia fashion against the French military.[84] Their grievances included excessive religious restrictions and the imposition of mass conscription. Soon, French forces faced a full-scale guerrilla insurrection that required sharp violence, arguably even genocide, to eventually quell.[85]

2. The Tyrolean Rebellion

Approximately one decade later, the Tyrolean rebellion of 1809 occurred in the context of war between two state alliances—France and Bavaria, against Austria and England. The county of Tyrol, previously under Austrian rule, had come under French and then Bavarian rule in 1805 and 1806, respectively. Similar to events in the Vendee, Tyrolean citizens grew frustrated by the actions of their Bavarian rulers, specifically related to tax raises, religious restrictions, and conscription. Supported initially by the

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[83] Christopher Daase, "Clausewitz and Small Wars," in *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 182–183. In addition to *On War*, Clausewitz also addressed irregular warfare on other occasions—most prominently in a series of military lectures and in his *Bekenntnisdenkschrift*, or memorandum of confession. Although both have yet to be translated into English, a preview of their content is available. Clausewitz scholar and writer Christopher Daase penned a chapter titled "Clausewitz and Small Wars" in Strachen and Herberg-Rothe's *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*. In this chapter, Daase challenges the notion that Clausewitz's writing does not contribute to or address the subject of small wars, or irregular warfare. On the contrary, Daase argues that, "Carl von Clausewitz was one of the first theorists of wars of national liberation," as exemplified by the content of Clausewitz's "Lectures on Small War," given at the Berliner Kriegsschule in 1811–12. In *Bekenntnisdenkschrift*, Clausewitz promoted the employment of the Spanish model of guerrilla warfare for use in Germany as defense against Napoleonic France. Daase makes three important claims about Clausewitz in relation to irregular warfare. The first is that, "Clausewitz provides the means for a superior conceptualization of political violence that allows us to describe historical and recent changes of war, including the emergence of guerrilla warfare and terrorism." Secondly, Daase claims, "[Clausewitz] offers theoretical insights into the dynamics of defence and offence which helps to explain why certain actors apply certain strategies and tactics." Finally, Daase asserts, "Clausewitz allows us to reflect on the effects of war on both actors and structures and helps to explain why big states often lose small wars." Christopher Daase, "Clausewitz and Small Wars," in *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 182–183.

[84] The Vendee is a western coastal region of France, south of the Loire River.

[85] Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 704–706.

Austrian government, Tyrolean men revolted and established an irregular partisan force. The Tyroleans won multiple battles against French and Bavarian troops before eventual being suppressed.[86]

3. The Spanish Insurrection

The Spanish insurrection also informed Clausewitz's ideas on irregular warfare. In this case, a Spanish resistance movement to French rule began in Madrid, then quickly spread throughout Spain before eventually being suppressed.[87] Notably, each of the above examples included partisan force success against larger, regular forces through the employment of guerrilla tactics. Each partisan force gained advantages based on their superior knowledge of the local terrain and population, as well as on their motivation and will.

This chapter addresses Clausewitz's ideas on irregular warfare as communicated in *On War*.[88] Clausewitz began his discussion of people's war, or resistance, at the broad, theoretical level. Thereafter, he prescribed characteristics, conditions, and guidance for

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[86] Martin Rink, "The Partisan's Metamorphosis: From Freelance Military Entrepreneur to German Freedom Fighter, 1740 to 1815," *War in History* 17 (2010): 21.

[87] "The [Spanish] guerrilla bands avoided open battle, specializing instead in ambushes, night raids, and surprise attacks on isolated outposts. They provoked the French into murderous, collective reprisals on civilians." Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 736.

[88] *On War* was first published in 1832. It was not initially recognized by Clausewitz's German contemporaries as the masterpiece that most view it as today. Michael Howard, "The Influence of Clausewitz," in *On War*, by Carl von Clausewitz, Trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 27. Clausewitz intended for the book to make a lasting impression for years to come, but he feared that it would be incorrectly interpreted. Ibid., 28. The great Prussian staff officer, Helmuth von Moltke, is credited with energizing a renewed interest in *On War* in the mid-nineteenth century. Ibid., 29. By 1905, five German editions had already been published. Ibid., 31. A French translation was published as early as 1849. Ibid., 36. The first English translation appeared in 1874, by British Colonel J.J. Graham, however, the British generally failed to appreciate Clausewitz's writing until after World War One. Ibid., 38. The original English edition was re-published in 1909, along with a truncated translation by T.M. Maguire. Ibid., 38. In 1933, a fourteenth German edition was published. Ibid., 41. The first English translation published in the United States was in 1943, translated by O.J. Matthijs Jolles. Many people consider this English translation to be superior to Graham's original English translation. It was not until the Korean War (1950–1953), however, that *On War* began to receive serious attention from American military officers. Ibid., 42. Another English version appeared in 1976, this one translated from German by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. The translations of Book VI, Chapter XXVI in the 1943 and 1976 English versions of *On War* are virtually identical in content, with only slight variance in word choice and sentence structure on occasion. Quotations used in this thesis chapter all derive from the 1943 *On War* translation due to this author's preference. Neither Clausewitz's *Bekenntnisdenkschrift* nor his Lectures on Small War have been translated to English at this time.

irregular warfare employment. Clausewitz's discussion of irregular warfare is short, but insightful, containing many important principles.

D. THEMES OF CLAUSEWITZ'S *ON WAR*

Clausewitz made two assertions in *On War* regarding irregular warfare at the theoretical level.[89] First, Clausewitz claimed that the accepted warfare model of his time was inadequate because it did not properly account for irregular warfare. Clausewitz recognized that many of his contemporaries viewed irregular warfare as either illegitimate or inadvisable. Aristocrats considered irregular warfare to be a "revolutionary means, a state of anarchy declared lawful, as dangerous to the social order at home as to the enemy; or on military grounds, believing that the result is not commensurate with the expenditure of force."[90] In short, irregular warfare was not an accepted practice.[91]

1. Irregular Warfare as a Progressive Tactic

Clausewitz believed that warfare had moved beyond the "limited military system," or restrictive lens, through which his European counterparts viewed conflict. In describing his view of irregular warfare, Clausewitz stated, "the elemental violence of war has burst its old artificial barriers; as an expansion and strengthening."[92] The last part of this statement indicates that Clausewitz saw advanced capability and opportunity through the employment of irregular warfare, beyond simply what could be achieved through regular warfare. Like Johann Ewald before him, Clausewitz's views on irregular warfare were progressive for his time.

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[89] It is clear from Clausewitz's writing and contextual understanding that the irregular warfare of which he speaks, is that of insurgency or resistance movements. Therefore, the use of the term irregular warfare in this chapter specifically denotes those forms of irregular warfare.

[90] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 457.

[91] The acceptability of irregular warfare is later revisited and expanded upon by German theorist Friedrich Freiherr von der Heydte in the twentieth century.

[92] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 457.

2. Irregular Warfare as an Attainable State Goal

Second, Clausewitz asserted that every state should maintain and be able to employ an irregular warfare capability. According to Clausewitz, "the nation which makes judicious use of this means [people's war] will gain a proportionate superiority over those who despise its use."[93] Thus, Clausewitz believed that states should maintain the option to employ irregular warfare within their repertoire of political-military tools. This is reinforced by Clausewitz's statement, "Therefore, we no longer ask: how much does the resistance which the whole nation in arms is capable of offering cost that nation? But: what is the influence which such resistance can have? What are its conditions and how is it to be used?"[94] The second two questions imply opportunity to use and opportunity through use, of irregular warfare. Clearly, Clausewitz believed in irregular warfare as a viable and potentially beneficial option in war.

E. CRITICAL ASPECTS OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

Next, Clausewitz identified irregular warfare characteristics and conditions, and also provided employment guidance.

1. Wide Distribution of Forces

He argued that resistance must be widely distributed so as not to be vulnerable to great blows of concentrated action. The theater of war in a resistance should embrace a considerable extent of the country. Therefore, if the resistance is viewed as a fire, or smoldering flame, it is both hard to completely extinguish and also capable of appearing in multiple locations throughout the battlefield.[95]

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[93] Ibid., 457.

[94] Ibid., 457–458.

[95] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 458.

2. Exploiting Terrain

Similarly, terrain matters. Clausewitz believed resistance must be "carried on in the interior of a country."[96] It is beneficial to the resistance if "the country is of a broken and inaccessible nature, either from being mountainous, or by reason of woods and marshes, or from the peculiar mode of cultivation in use."[97] Also, a more rural countryside environment favors the employment of irregular warfare. According to Clausewitz, the "scattered distribution of homesteads" and numerous, but poor, roads create challenging conditions for the quartering of regular troops.[98] A resistance movement, on the other hand, benefits from rural terrain and society. The dispersion of houses and people make it hard to corral an irregular force, and in this environment, "the spirit of the resistance exists everywhere, but is nowhere tangible."[99]

3. Pursuing Patience as a Strategy

Like space, Clausewitz also emphasized the importance of dispersion in time. He argued that resistance creates a tension that can only destroy the enemy over time; there are no knockout blows. In other words, the war is not decided by a single catastrophe. Tensions rise in some areas, and fall in others, but over time, the enemy is worn down and can be defeated.[100]

4. Maintaining Alliances

Clausewitz recommended against the independent employment of irregular warfare. Instead, he argued that, "we must imagine a people's war always in combination with a war carried on by a regular army, and both carried on according to a plan embracing the operations of the whole."[101] This statement is indicative of a more

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[96] Ibid., 458.

[97] Ibid., 458.

[98] Ibid., 458.

[99] Ibid., 459.

[100] Ibid., 458.

[101] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 458.

advanced view of irregular warfare. It may derive from Clausewitz's understanding of colonial combined operations against the British in the American Revolution (1776–1783).[102]

5. Knowing Your Men

Clausewitz believed that the necessary measures of irregular warfare required a certain type of people and national character. He said, "It must be admitted that a poor population accustomed to hard work and privation usually shows itself more vigorous and better suited to war."[103] Ewald similarly articulated this idea in his descriptions of, and praise for, the American insurgents that he encountered during the American Revolution, and it is known that Clausewitz not only read Ewald's writings, but also recommended them to his own students.

Clausewitz also provided guidance on the manning and employment of a resistance force:

> National levies and masses of armed peasants cannot and should not be employed against the main body of the enemy's army, or even against any considerable forces; they must not attempt to crunch the core; they must only nibble at the surface and the edges. They should rise in the provinces situated at the sides of the theater of war, and in which the assailant does not appear in force, in order to draw these provinces entirely from his influence. Where there is as yet no enemy, there is no lack of courage to oppose him, and the mass of the neighboring population is gradually kindled at this example. Thus the fire spreads as it does in heather, and reaches at last that stretch of ground on which the aggressor is based; it seizes his lines of communication and preys upon the vital thread by which his existence is supported.[104]

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[102] For example, Nathanael Greene successfully combined regular and irregular force operations against the British, resulting in British General Charles Cornwallis eventually ceding what terrain he had gained in the American South. John Arquilla, "The Confederacy Could Have Won—Unconventionally: a Thought Experiment for Special Warriors," *Special Warfare*, (Spring 2001): 10–13. Retrieved from http://business.highbeam.com/6217/article-1G1–78397581/confederacy-could-have-won-unconventionally-thought.

[103] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 458.

[104] Ibid., 459.

This statement reveals Clausewitz's understanding of the path along which a resistance should proceed to victory. It is methodical and sequential, but lacks the explicit phased nature of theories such as Mao Tse Tung's three-phase unconventional warfare model. Therefore, Clausewitz's ideas may offer more employment flexibility.

6. Achieving Vapor and Vagary

Continuing to address resistance force employment, Clausewitz warned that armed peasants of a resistance should rarely be concentrated and employed in mass, for this detracts from their advantageous qualities. Clausewitz noted how peasants benefit from dispersion, stating, "Armed peasants, on the contrary, when scattered, disperse in all directions, for which no elaborate plan is required."[105] Therefore, "a people's war, it should, like a kind of nebulous vapory essence, nowhere condense into a solid body; otherwise the enemy sends an adequate force against this core . . . on the other hand, it is necessary that this mist should gather at some points into denser masses and form threatening clouds from which now and again a formidable flash of lightning may burst forth."[106] Clausewitz elaborated, however, that the concentrated points of attack should be "chiefly on the flanks of the enemy's theater of war," and if possible, "supported by a small force of regular troops so as to give it the appearance of a regular force."[107] Clausewitz later stated, "If, therefore, its combustible material is anywhere to be fanned into a considerable flame, it must be at remote points where it has air, and where it cannot be extinguished by one great blow."[108]

7. Recognizing Morale as Critical

Finally, Clausewitz addressed motivation and morale as it relates to the enemy and to the resistance force. He stated that resistance attacks on the enemy have the

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[105] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 459.

[106] Ibid., 459–460.

[107] Ibid., 460.

[108] Ibid., 461.

potential to "create a feeling of uneasiness and dread [within the enemy]."[109] Importantly, the morale of the resistance, according to Clausewitz, can and should be elevated through the employment of regular troops. Clausewitz stated, " The easiest way for a general to produce this more effective form of national rising is to support the movement by small detachments sent from the army. Without such a support of a few regular troops as an encouragement, the inhabitants generally lack the impulse and the confidence to take up arms."[110] Therefore, the regular troops can viewed as an accelerant or spark for the resistance. Clausewitz does not specifically address a scenario in which a resistance force operates in isolation and the resulting effects on morale.

8. Resisting the Temptation to Despondency

Clausewitz cautioned the weaker of the two opponents in irregular warfare, in this case the resistance, against accepting defeat too quickly. He explained, "No state should believe its fate, that is, its entire existence, to be dependent upon one battle, no matter how decisive it may be."[111] Instead, Clausewitz promoted the option to "retreat in the interior of the country," and the chance to seek external support from a different country or actor. He emphatically concluded that, "There is always time to die."[112] Clausewitz understood the disproportionately high levels of morale and fortitude required to be successful in irregular warfare.

In closing, it is clear that Clausewitz saw value in irregular warfare during a time when many were reluctant to do so. He provided a vision as to the nature of irregular warfare; its characteristics; conditions; and manning and employment guidance. In hindsight, many of his ideas were clearly groundbreaking. Clausewitz was undoubtedly influenced by the writings of his fellow German-speaking predecessor, Johann Ewald. In similar fashion, Clausewitz's writing would impact future German irregular warfare theorists.

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[109] Ibid., 460.

[110] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 460.

[111] Ibid., 461.

[112] Ibid., 461.

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IV. PAUL EMIL VON LETTOW-VORBECK

At the turn of the twentieth century, European powers held substantial colonial territories in Africa. In east Africa alone, Germany, England, Portugal, France, and Belgium all possessed colonies. Imperial Germany's premier colony was German East Africa (GEA), situated just south of the Horn of Africa in what is today Tanzania. Bounded by British territory to the north, British and Belgian territory to the west, Portuguese territory to the south, and the Indian Ocean to the east, GEA was "nearly twice the size of Germany and included terrain ranging from arid steppes to humid jungles and rugged mountains."[113] The colony's interior offered the promise of a vast expanse of natural resources, accessible by two east-west running rail lines that originated at the port cities of Tanga and Dar es Salaam.[114]

Great Britain was strategically stronger than Germany in East Africa. British East Africa (BEA), a colony which has since become Kenya, lay directly north of GEA. In addition to BEA, the British owned the island of Zanzibar off the coast of GEA, and the British Royal Navy commanded the waters of the Indian Ocean.[115] Before World War I, "Great Britain relied on the Royal Navy and sea dominance for its imperial defense. A worldwide-system of undersea telegraph cables connected friendly territories to the British homeland and provided unparalleled strategic, secure communication."[116] This combination of a large, dispersed navy and effective global communication infrastructure allowed the British to secure trade routes, move troops, and reinforce territories within its massive empire, providing an important advantage over colonial rivals.

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[113] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 14.

[114] These " …marvels of German engineering …brought western civilization inland; towns sprang up along their tracks and plantations were worked within hauling distance." Byron Farwell, *The Great War in Africa* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 110–111.

[115] Ibid., 19. Zanzibar (16km off the coast of GEA) served as a hub for British strategic communication cables. Because the Germans lacked their own equivalent system, they also relied on these cables, thus presenting a vulnerability in time of war.

[116] Ibid., 15.

Germany's Indian Ocean naval presence was smaller than Great Britain's and sought advantage in speed. Its premier cruiser, the SMS *Königsberg*, boasted ten 4.1-inch guns and a maximum speed of 24 knots.[117] In the event of war, Germany would employ *Kreuzerkrieg*, or cruiser warfare, a strategy that utilized speed to attack British merchant ships while avoiding the stronger British warships—a kind of maritime guerrilla war.[118] The German ships were principally based at the GEA ports of Dar es Salaam and Tanga. Germany also maintained a naval presence on both Lake Victoria in northern GEA and Lake Tanganyika along its western border.

In January 1914, then-43-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck (see Figure 3) arrived in GEA to take command of the colonial defense force known as the *Schutztruppe*.[119] This force was led by German officers and non-commissioned officers, and its ranks largely consisted of native Askari soldiers.[120] Von Lettow boasted a strong resume, consisting of a traditional Prussian officer cadet academy education, General Staff experience, and *Seebataillon* (Marine) command. He had significant foreign-service stints, including service in the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900–1901 and in suppression of the Herero revolt in German South-West Africa in 1904–1905.[121] Von Lettow anticipated a conflict in Africa and considered it a strategic opportunity to support Germany's war effort against the British. Beyond German cruiser operations in the Indian Ocean, von Lettow pondered, "The question was whether it was possible for us in our subsidiary theatre of war to exercise any influence on the great decision at home. Could we, with our small forces, prevent considerable numbers of the enemy from intervening in Europe, or in other important theatres, or inflict on our

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[117] Ibid., 20.

[118] Ibid., 16.

[119] The Schutztruppe consisted primarily of indigenous soldiers, referred to as Askari, and German colonial officers. The force was originally intended for internal policing, not for fighting major foreign powers. Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 88.

[120] The word "Askari" simply means soldier in Swahili. It was commonly used in the east African region to describe almost any native soldier during the colonial period.

[121] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 7. During the Boxer Rebellion, von Lettow, "was struck by 'the clumsiness by which English troops were moved and led in battle.'" Byron Farwell, *The Great War in Africa* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 106.

enemies any loss of personnel or war material worth mentioning?"[122] Von Lettow's civilian authority was GEA Governor Dr. Heinrich Schnee. Schnee wanted more than anything to avoid colonial conflict, in order to preserve economic development and prevent an African uprising.[123] World War I began on July 28, 1914, when Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

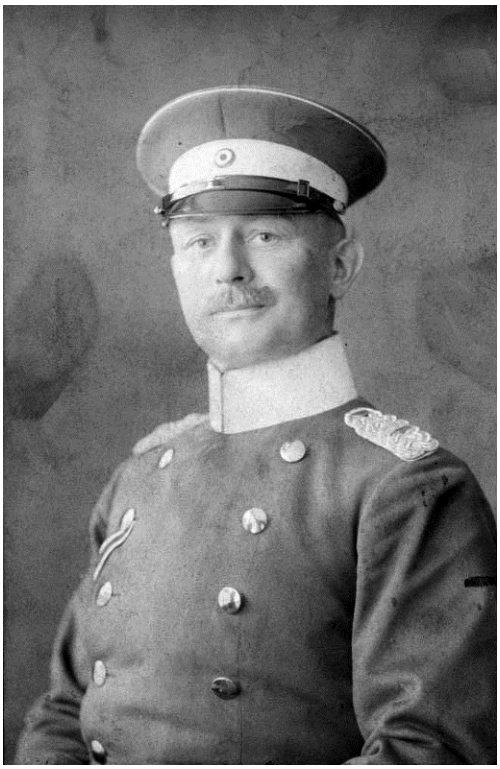

Figure 3. Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck

[122] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 3.

[123] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 36. The relationship between von Lettow and Schnee would remain contentious for the next four years. "As a Prussian of the old school," Historian Eward Paice noted, "von Lettow-Vorbeck believed implicitly that the military was the First Estate, the buttress upon which the future of an embattled Fatherland rested." Edward Paice, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa* (London: Phoenix, 2008), 18.

A. THE CAMPAIGN IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA

On August 7, 1914, British ships shelled Dar es Salaam, thereby bringing World War I to east Africa.[124] The attack destroyed a radio tower, but its primary target, the SMS *Königsberg*, remained elusive.[125] With this outbreak of hostilities, Governor Schnee ordered the surrender of the colony. Von Lettow defiantly issued a contrary order: "I was taking over executive power, and that negotiations with the enemy must be conducted through me alone."[126] Von Lettow ordered the Schutztruppe and available partisan forces to engage the British along the GEA-BEA border. Von Lettow's early direct engagements soon gave way to a four-year irregular warfare campaign, during which the Schutztruppe faced enemy pressure from all cardinal directions while suffering material and manpower disadvantages. Yet, von Lettow managed to attrite his enemy throughout and only surrendered after learning of Germany's war capitulation four years later. This chapter describes von Lettow's irregular campaign in five phases, as set out by the author for purposes of clarity and analysis.[127] For visual reference, Figures 4 and 5 depict colonial Africa and German East Africa, respectively.

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[124] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 19. By initiating conflict against German East Africa, Great Britain had technically violated Chapter III, Article 10 of the Berlin Act of 1885, which proclaimed European colonial neutrality in time of war on the European continent.

[125] Ibid., 19.

[126] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 28.

[127] In addition to secondary sources, this chapter draws heavily upon two first-hand accounts from opposite sides of the war: General Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck's *My Reminiscences of East Africa* and Major Richard Meinertzhagen's (senior British field intelligence officer) *Army Diary*. Both accounts reflect mutual respect for the enemy, acknowledgement of mistakes, and similar assessments of events.

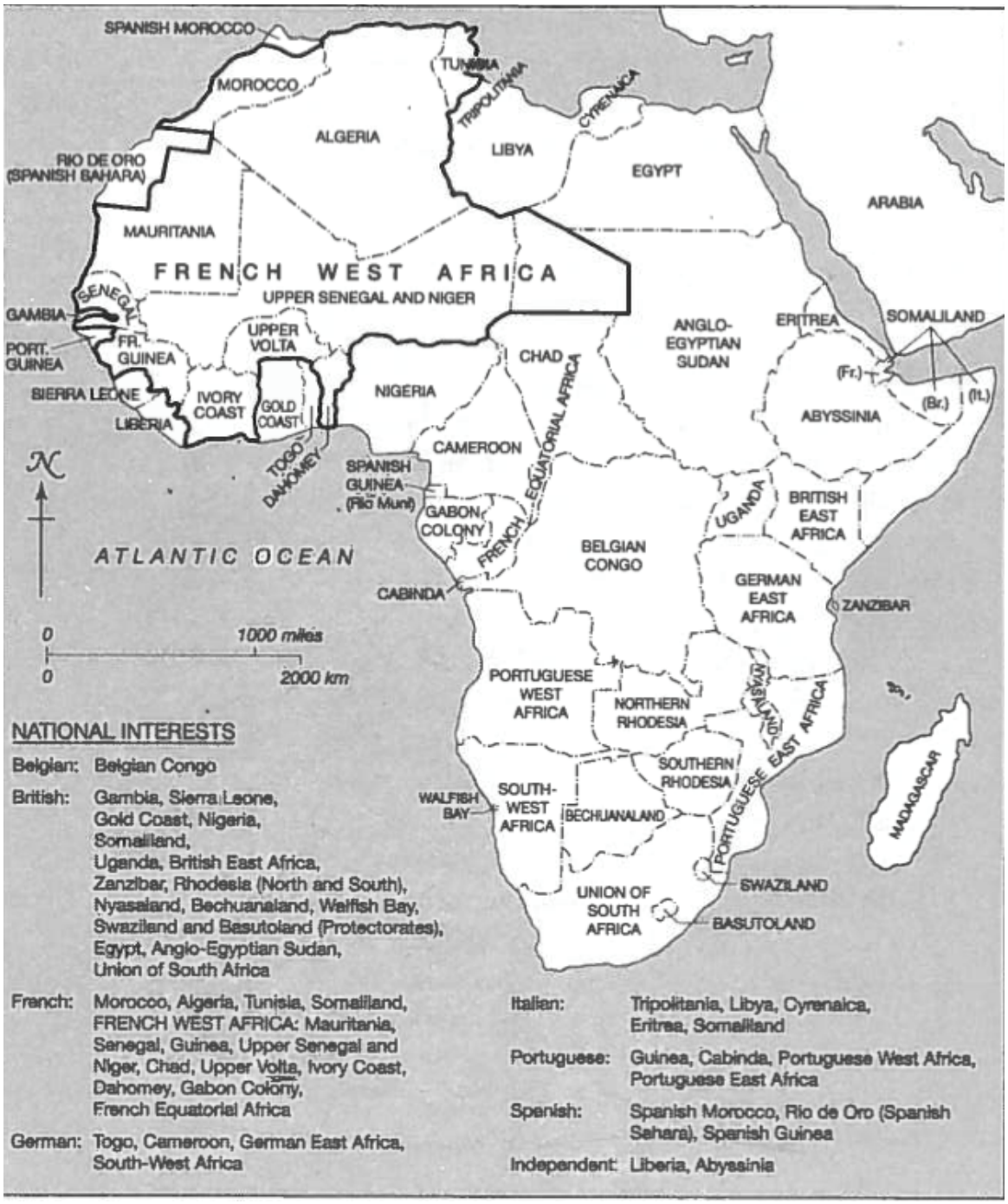

Figure 4. Colonial Africa in 1914

Figure 5. German East Africa in 1914

1. Phase I: Harassment

Phase I (August 1914 to March 1916) began with the SMS *Königsberg* conducting hit-and-run attacks on British naval and shipping vessels in the Indian Ocean.[128] Increased British naval attention and limited coal resupply soon restricted the *Königsberg's* mobility, forcing the ship to seek refuge in the Rufiji River Delta (see

[128] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 14–15.

Figure 6).[129] Once there, environmental obstacles unique to the delta blunted the British ability to destroy the cruiser until July 1915. At that point, her German crew abandoned and sunk the *Königsberg* using a torpedo warhead.[130] But the Schutztruppe had managed to salvage all ten of the cruiser's 4.1-inch naval guns for use in future land operations.[131] Phase I also included fighting on Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika, both of which the Germans would eventually abandon under pressure.

Figure 6. The SMS *Königsberg*

In the summer and fall of 1914, the Schutztruppe conducted harassing attacks against British targets on the Uganda rail line connecting Mombasa to Taveta. These netted limited material effects but important psychological results. The British Committee of Imperial Defence in London authorized an increase of four thousand Indian

[129] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign*, 1914–1918 (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 55.

[130] Ibid., 92–93.

[131] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 85.

troops to the East African theater amid fears of a larger German invasion, validating von Lettow's plan to draw British resources to his location.[132]

On November 2, 1914, the British executed an amphibious assault on Tanga using 12,000 Imperial troops of the British Indian Army.[133] This operation quickly proved to be a disaster for the British and an enormous success for von Lettow. Not only did von Lettow's spy network inform him of the British intent to invade, but British leadership also found it necessary to announce their impending arrival.[134] A frustrated British Intelligence Officer, Major Richard Meinertzhagen, noted, "To give the Germans twenty-four hours' advance warning of attacks seems criminal. And the Germans are such good soldiers that we can ill afford to give them a single advantage."[135] Furthermore, British General Aitken failed to conduct an adequate reconnaissance, partly due to over-confidence based on his racial bias. Aitken predicted, "The Indian Army will make short work of a lot of niggers."[136] In the aftermath, however, Meinertzhagen assessed, "During the two days of fighting at Tanga we lost 800 killed and wounded. [Brigadier General and Brigade Commander] Tighe lost exactly 50 per cent of his officers…we did not capture a single German, either European or African."[137]

Von Lettow and the Schutztruppe also executed a well-prepared defense with their 3,000 men, resulting in an overwhelming victory.[138] In post-Tanga prisoner

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[132] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 25.

[133] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 34. As the first Commander of British Forces in the East African Campaign, General Aitken's résumé reflected, "a conventional military career with less active service than his contemporaries . . . he showed little grasp of modern warfare . . . and did not inspire confidence."

[134] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 26–27. British planning and operational security with regards to the Tanga assault was extremely poor, so it is no surprise that von Lettow acquired advance warning.

[135] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 88.

[136] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 28.

[137] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 96.

[138] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 27. Von Lettow's defense preparations against the British amphibious assault were aided by his previous *Seebataillon* command experience. Edward Paice, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa* (London: Phoenix, 2008), 45.

negotiations, Meinertzhagen noted that, "German machine guns were deadly and swept every approach, every house spitting fire … The German officers whom I met today were all hard looking, keen and fit and clearly knew their job and realised its seriousness."[139] As a result, the Schutztruppe succeeded in capturing enough modern rifles to re-arm three Askari companies, of approximately 130 men each, as well as 600,000 rounds of ammunition, sixteen machine guns, valuable field telephones, and clothing to last the Schutztruppe for a year.[140] More importantly, "The success at Tanga called forth and revived determination to resist [the British] all over the colony."[141]

Following victory at Tanga, von Lettow transitioned his main effort to the Kilimanjaro region of northern GEA—and area that offered a safe haven and a launching point for offensive operations. Throughout 1915, the Schutztruppe penetrated the BEA border and executed nearly fifty raids against the Uganda railroad.[142] Through these sabotage and ambush operations, the Schutztruppe "developed a system of fighting patrols" and experimented with different types of mines and explosive devices to blow up British trains and track, but rarely remained to engage the British response forces.[143] According to von Lettow, "Our constant endeavor was to injure the enemy, force him to adopt protective measures, and thus to contain his forces here, in the district of the Uganda Railway."[144] The British responded by requesting thousands of South African

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[139] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 91–98.

[140] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 45. And, Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 69.

[141] Ibid., 51. Although not unprecedented, von Lettow's deployment of native askari as combat, rather than support, troops was viewed by the British as uncivilized and counter to the accepted rules of wars. The British, however, would shortly follow suit. Edward Paice, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa* (London: Phoenix, 2008), 76.

[142] Edward Paice, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa* (London: Phoenix, 2008), 94.

[143] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 66–67.

[144] Ibid., 77.

Boer reinforcements, establishing an alliance with the Boers that would last through the end of the war and beyond.[145]

Phase I ended in the spring of 1916. At this time, the British and 30,000 newly arrived South African soldiers initiated an offensive operation against the 6,000-strong Schutztruppe in the Kilimanjaro region. Von Lettow assessed this to be an appropriate time for withdrawal from the area. His decision derived from already unacceptably high Schutztruppe casualty rates and an acknowledgement that, "In contrast to the great expenditure of ammunition by the hostile artillery, our light guns had to restrict themselves to taking advantage of specially favorable targets, not only because ammunition was scarce, but also because we had no shrapnel [rounds]."[146] In moving the Schutztruppe south, von Lettow conceded the Usambara (Northern) Railroad while leaving a small rear guard to harass the enemy.[147] Von Lettow timed his move with the arrival of the spring rains to further disrupt enemy pursuit.

2. Phase II: Drawing the Enemy In

In Phase II (March 1916–September 1916), von Lettow established an increasingly irregular defense in the colony's interior, characterized by greater dispersion and delegation of operational decision-making authority, as well as smaller unit size.[148] The Schutztruppe's new operations base, Kondoa-Irangi, lay along the Central Railway, connecting Dar es Salaam to Tabora. The strategy was not to defeat the British decisively, but rather to draw them deeper into the country using the Central Railway as bait. The British responded by flooding central GEA with additional British, Boer, Indian, and African troops, but their lengthening supply lines became easy targets for the

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[145] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 102–104.

[146] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 104.

[147] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 125. Note: The initial 10,000-man British pursuit element suffered 85% casualties as a result of environmental challenges and Schutztruppe rearguard actions. Ibid., 130.

[148] Ibid., 111–135.

mobile and acclimatized Schutztruppe. Soon, however, von Lettow felt pressured to adjust his strategy again, thus ending Phase II in September of 1916.[149]

3. Phase III: Tightening Operations

Von Lettow's Phase III (September 1916–November 1917) strategic shift involved moving his force into the particularly rough Uluguru mountain region that facilitated defense, but offered limited local re-supply.[150] This rugged area had previously served as a mountain retreat for German colonists, so von Lettow's officers knew the terrain, enhancing their ability to conduct harassing operations within a larger regional defense. To ensure survival in this inhospitable environment, von Lettow thinned the Schutztruppe by sending non-essential personnel home and cutting porters to minimal levels.[151] Simultaneously, von Lettow gave up defense of Lake Tanganyika in the West, which he had maintained to this point.[152]

The British suffered heavy losses in their pursuit. They failed to fix the Schutztruppe and also faced brutally effective ambushes.[153] These, combined with environmental factors, degraded the strength of the British. For example:

> The North Lancashire Regiment had arrived at Tanga in 1914 at 900 personnel and was down to 345 to include replacements. The Twenty-fifth Fusiliers from South Africa—Boers—had come in at 1,200 strong and now numbered 200. The Ninth South African Infantry had started at 1,135 and now numbered 120 men. Even a number of British staff officers had been forced out of country due to illness … The Indian soldiers suffered greatly from disease by this point, to include malaria, dysentery, pneumonia, black water fever, smallpox, the plague, typhus, typhoid, and meningitis … Of the British sixty thousand transport animals, more than

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[149] Ibid., 139–140.

[150] In the fall of 1916, the Schutztruppe consisted of 1,100 Germans, 7,300 Askaris, sixteen field guns, seventy-three machine guns, and four remaining 4.1-inch guns that had been salvaged from the *Königsberg*. It included a main element operating in central GEA, a western detachment, and a detachment in defense of Dar es Salaam. Ibid., 151.

[151] Askari and German women and children were previously permitted to accompany the Schutztruppe in the field to improve morale and guarantee troop loyalty. Initially, just the Germans were released, then most of the Askari as well. Ibid., 149, 169–170.

[152] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 150.

[153] Ibid., 154–155.

> fifty-nine thousand had died, and their hundreds of imported motor vehicles and wagons were mostly non-mission capable.[154]

From the Uluguru Mountains, the Schutztruppe moved to the southern Rufiji River Delta. This mosquito-infested environment offered another temporary location from which to fight while gradually moving further south. Depending on the fertility of the land, the Schutztruppe occasionally enjoyed nutritional sufficiency, but it mostly suffered from a lack thereof. Thus, resourcefulness and survival became paramount.[155] Meanwhile, the British believed that von Lettow could not sustain his native Askari support and that his force could be trapped against GEA's southern border with Portuguese East Africa.[156]

In October 1917, the British closed in on the Schutztruppe main body. Von Lettow engaged them. He credited knowing "the personality of the enemy commander [General Beves]" with allowing him to determine the proper strategy to win.[157] Based on a previous engagement at Reata, von Lettow assessed that Beves' aggressive personality would prompt him to order repeated frontal assaults—a prediction that proved correct.[158] According to von Lettow, "On the evening of October 18th we had, with some 1,500 men, completely defeated a whole enemy detachment at least 4,000, and probably not less than 6,000 strong. With the exception of Tanga, it was the most serious defeat he had suffered."[159] After years of fighting on the run, living off the land, and facing a well-reinforced enemy, the Schutztruppe clearly still posed a formidable challenge. In the fall of 1917, Phase III concluded in the southeast corner of GEA, at which point von Lettow

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[154] Ibid., 155.

[155] Ibid., 161–163. Survival included shooting elephants for meat and hippopotami for fat, collecting fungi, and distilling a form of salt from local plants. Von Lettow personally suffered from recurrent malaria, lack of nutrition, and foot infections.

[156] Ibid., 149–157. General Jan Smuts was so confident in imminent victory that he requested von Lettow's surrender via letter, which von Lettow viewed as a sign of British weakness rather than strength.

[157] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 182.

[158] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 212.

[159] Ibid.

sought a new strategic move and the British prepared for what they thought would be victory.

4. Phase IV: Madness as a Method

Von Lettow initiated Phase IV (November 1917–July 1918) with a surprise cross-border withdrawal that caught the British off-guard. In November 1917, the Schutztruppe marched south into Portuguese East Africa to evade pressure and to reconstitute.[160] Before departing, von Lettow assessed his situation and concluded it necessary to further reduce his force to increase mobility and speed. He allowed sick and wounded personnel to be taken prisoner by the British, producing a humanitarian burden for his enemy.[161]

During the following nine months, the Schutztruppe conducted dozens of raids against Portuguese military camps, depots, and even villages. Portuguese defenses proved ineffective, which enabled the Schutztruppe to regain its strength by capturing weapons and ammunition. Von Lettow also used this opportunity to re-hone the tactical proficiency and battlefield discipline of the Schutztruppe, which had eroded after lengthy campaigning.[162]

In the spring of 1918, von Lettow again split his force into three elements to account for less fertile land for food supply and to continue to frustrate the British pursuit elements.[163] The Schutztruppe's evasive maneuvers benefitted from the rugged terrain and receptive indigenous population, who viewed the Schutztruppe as a welcome

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[160] Ibid., 229.

[161] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 187, 212.

[162] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 194–196. In victory at Ngomano, Von Lettow acknowledged Schutztruppe behavior inconsistent with their previously more chivalrous track record, to include excessive killing, raping, and pillaging. Von Lettow responded to what he described as the "'rape of Ngomano'" by taking the opportunity to re-train his force in basic operational discipline, something that would benefit them later when re-engaging the British. In his memoirs, von Lettow stated, "It was important for me to maintain the moral of our troops unconditionally." Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 268.

[163] Ibid., 202.The remaining British force consisted primarily of Nigerians, Gold Coast troops, and the King's African Rifles and numbered approximately 30,000, which represented a nearly 20–1 manpower advantage over the *Schutztruppe*.

alternative to the callousness of the ruling Portuguese.[164] In contrast, the British suffered enormously. According to one report, they buried 26,000 porters in PEA alone.[165] The difference in losses between the British and German sides at this point could be attributed to von Lettow's decision to thin his force and the Schutztruppe's advanced survival skills and mobility.

5. Phase V: Confusing the British

By July 1918, the Schutztruppe was arguably one of the most self-sufficient guerrilla forces in the history of modern warfare. For nine months it had survived off the land and captured enemy supplies, while managing to retrain, rebuild, and re-equip itself.[166] Von Lettow began Phase V (July 1918–November 1918) by leading the Schutztruppe back north into GEA, skirting the east side of Lake Nyasa. He employed three columns for this maneuver, intending to protect the middle column with two flank columns while running a gauntlet of larger British formations attempting to trap the Schutztruppe. Before the British realized it, the Schutztruppe had slipped past them. According to von Lettow, "The men were well armed, equipped and fed, and the strategic situation at the moment was more favorable than it had been in a long time."[167] However, his force was suffering from cumulative exhaustion. For almost two months, the Schutztruppe had averaged over 28 km per day with only three days' rest. Rather than continuing north toward Tabora—a move the British expected—von Lettow instead led the Schutztruppe southwest into Northern Rhodesia, where softer targets could be exploited prior to returning to GEA.[168]

On November 11, 1918, however, von Lettow received word that Germany had signed the Armistice and his Schutztruppe was to surrender. Once confirmed, the newly

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[164] Ibid., 212.

[165] Ibid., 212–213.

[166] Ibid., 215.

[167] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 318.

[168] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 292–293. Note: Porter desertions were also beginning to take its toll on the Schutztruppe.

promoted General von Lettow-Vorbeck and his loyal officers did just that.[169] This concluded the Great War in German East Africa.

B. LESSONS LEARNED

Important lessons for the practical application to irregular warfare can be drawn from von Lettow's four-year campaign.

1. Adapt to Survive

First and foremost in von Lettow's success was his ability to adapt strategically to ensure Schutztruppe survival and enemy attrition. In his memoirs, von Lettow summarized his operational conditions: "I ask the reader to imagine himself in the position of a Commander, with insufficient means, exposed to attack by superior numbers, who has continually to ask himself: what must I do in order to retain freedom of movement and hope?"[170] Von Lettow's timely and thoughtful decision-making consistently enabled his force to achieve lopsided results while retaining the initiative.

2. Economize

The Schutztruppe enjoyed early success in direct engagements, such as at Tanga, but following a later battle near Kilimanjaro, von Lettow determined that although successful, "such heavy losses as we also had suffered could only be borne in exceptional cases. We had to economize our forces in order to last out a long war … to restrict myself to guerilla warfare, was evidently imperative."[171] His subsequent adaptation involved withdrawing the Schutztruppe towards GEA's interior, and once there, re-organizing it into smaller, more autonomous elements capable of mobile defensive operations. Von Lettow assessed that this area, known as the Mahenge Country, would support his long-term plan: "By moving there we should avoid being surrounded, it was fertile, and

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[169] At the time, it was the British who informed von Lettow of his promotion.

[170] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 140.

[171] Ibid., 63.

suitable for guerilla warfare. From there also it would be possible to withdraw further to the south and to continue the war for a long time to come."[172]

This move presented South African General Jan Smuts a risky but enticing objective.[173] Smuts' senior intelligence officer, Major Meinertzhagen, cautioned in his diary:

> He [Smuts] is irresistibly drawn towards von Lettow and if he persists he will lose the initiative and the campaign will end in simply following von Lettow about wherever he chooses to wander. He is more mobile than we are and is operating in his own country. But we have vastly superior forces and should force the pace and dictate operations, making him fight us where we will and not where he wishes.[174]

Smuts indeed pursued von Lettow, and in short order, deployed increasingly large numbers of troops into central GEA. The British utilized the Central Railway as their primary line of communication, but like the Uganda Railway, this too became a frequent target of the Schutztruppe and a liability.

3. Withdraw and Recuperate

Von Lettow's biggest irregular warfare adaptation involved his decision to move his force into PEA to seek refuge. This creative solution enabled the Schutztruppe to escape increasing British pressure, overwhelm weaker Portuguese opponents, and capture substantial amounts of food, weapons, ammunition, and much needed medical supplies like quinine. Ultimately, von Lettow's decision to move south across a colonial border re-energized the Schutztruppe, facilitating its eventual move back north into German East Africa.

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[172] Ibid., 141.

[173] Ross Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2004), 119. The British campaign in GEA was led by six different commanding officers between 1914–1918. These included two South African officers, as noted by asterisks in the following chronological list: Brigadier General Arthur Aitken (August 1914–January 1915), Brigadier General Richard Wapshare (January 1915–April 1915), General Michael Tighe (April 1915–February 1916), General Jan Smuts* (February 1916–February 1917), Major General Reginald Hoskins (February 1917–April 1917), and Major General J.L. van Deventer* (April 1917–November 1918).

[174] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 177.

4. Memorize the Terrain

Von Lettow drove environmental adaptations. During previous combat experience in South-West Africa, von Lettow had learned the value of local knowledge of the land and fieldcraft skills to fight in the African bush. Von Lettow did everything in his power to reconnoiter the countryside and utilize the environment to the Schutztruppe's advantage. In his memoirs, von Lettow described his personal reconnaissance of terrain and enemy positions both on foot and using his bicycle, nearly resulting in his death several times, but also guaranteeing tactical advantages over the British. Major Meinertzhagen noted, "von Lettow is slippery and is not going to be caught by maneuver. He knows the country better than we do. "[175]

Upon arriving in GEA in January 1914, von Lettow initiated an aggressive force assessment schedule, including visits to every outpost of his fourteen military companies. This enabled his understanding of the terrain and an opportunity to connect with a network of German colonial families. Throughout his travels, von Lettow noted both defensive and offensive possibilities. He also identified equipment shortcomings that affected his force. For example, the Askaris were primarily outfitted with the Franco–Prussian War -era Model 1871 Mauser single-shot rifle, which emitted a cloud of black smoke upon firing. This obstructed the firer's view and signaled his position to the enemy.[176] Von Lettow repeatedly seized and sustained the initiative to overcome such disadvantages through the end of the campaign, at which point they had finally captured enough modern rifles from the Portuguese to completely discard the more antiquated Model 1871 Mausers.[177]

5. Lead from the Front

Von Lettow also lived, fought, and suffered with his troops in the field. He preferred to lead from the front. Even at the end of the conflict, the Askaris under his

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[175] Ibid., 195.

[176] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 10–11.

[177] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 277.

command remained fiercely loyal to von Lettow, accustomed to his hard discipline, and respectful of a man who never asked of his troops what he would not do himself—an impressive feat considering his age of 44 at the start of the war.[178] For his dedication, von Lettow also suffered. Over the course of the campaign, he received a mortar-shrapnel wound; was nearly shot on multiple occasions; temporarily lost his eyesight; and experienced recurrent malarial symptoms, foot infections, and general lack of nutrition and sleep.

6. Go Small

Von Lettow's early, more conventional strategy required an enormous number of porters to carry food, water, and equipment. When moving on rail, "a company of 150 Askaris, their 150 porters, plus machine guns, rifles, and packs, filled 7 carriages of a train."[179] Depending on the season and terrain, water and food could also prove challenging. Von Lettow overcame these challenges by not only thinning his force, but also dispersing and then re-consolidating it, depending on what the environment dictated.

7. Remember Nature

Von Lettow also used the environment against his adversaries. In 1916, he timed his southern withdrawal to occur just prior to the annual spring rains. The rains slowed the British pursuit while the disease-bearing tsetse fly wreaked havoc on British soldiers, horses, and pack animals.[180] The Schutztruppe also dressed for the environment, wearing high-necked uniforms, long-sleeved shirts, and puttees, whereas the British exposed more of their skin to mosquito attack by wearing shorts and long stockings.[181] As a result, the British suffered higher rates of typhus, malaria, and dysentery.

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[178] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 4.

[179] Ibid., 41.

[180] The tsetse fly is a large fly common to Sub-Saharan Africa and known for high rates of lethal and debilitating disease transmission, frequently affecting humans and animals.

[181] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 132.

8. Simulate Ubiquity

Von Lettow also forced resource adaptations in the Schutztruppe. In early 1916, when it became clear that the *Königsberg* no longer possessed any offensive capability, von Lettow ordered it be stripped of all serviceable weapons and equipment. This included ten 4.1-inch guns, to be distributed throughout the country for land defense.[182] Von Lettow initially assigned five guns to the defense of Dar es Salaam, two to Tanga, two to Lake Tanganyika, and one to Lake Victoria. They provided an important indirect fire capability, used most effectively in preplanned ambush and defensive positions.[183] Often, one or two guns fired in such a manner as to deceive the British into believing many more of them existed. This involved firing from one position and quickly displacing to another, as well as stoking hilltop fires at night to misrepresent dummy firing positions. Von Lettow also reassigned the entire crew of the *Königsberg* to the Schutztruppe, a total of 24 naval officers and 559 noncommissioned officers and enlisted men.[184] These personnel initially joined the defense of Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria before being incorporated into the Schutztruppe ground defense.

9. Maximize Available Weapons Technology

The Schutztruppe also fabricated wooden frames to enable quick movement of its Maxim machine guns to the front of formations and to alternate fighting positions consistent with von Lettow's mobile defensive plans. The Schutztruppe chose ambush and fighting positions based on fields of fire, helping to maximize the guns' effect. In contrast, the British strapped their Vickers machine guns to mules during movement, increasing the time it took to put the guns into action.[185] Major Meinertzhagen lamented

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[182] Von Lettow requested special gun carriages to facilitate moving and firing the 4.1- inch guns on land—a request fulfilled via amphibious resupply in early 1916. This provided the Schutztruppe an enormous boost entering the 1916 fighting season. Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 119.

[183] Each SK L/40 gun weighed 3,428 lbs., fired 38 lb., 4.1 inch shells, at a maximum distance of 13,300 yards, but required special cradles to fire effectively from land. N. J. M. Campbell, *Naval Weapons of World War Two* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1985), 249.

[184] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 118–119.

[185] Ibid., 133.

his force's poor employment techniques, saying, "The handling of our machine guns is appalling. Our officers do not seem to understand their use or their power."[186]

10. Protect Morale

Finally, in late 1917 and early 1918, von Lettow adapted his maneuvers to account for a British psychological warfare operation. British leaflet drops targeted native civilian populations in an attempt to drive a wedge between them and von Lettow's Askari soldiers, many of who relied on local support and resupply. To counteract potential negative effects on the morale of his Askaris, von Lettow kept his columns on the move and conducted raiding operations to seize loot and motivate his men. By March of 1918, the Schutztruppe had crisscrossed 2,500 miles of terrain in PEA and showed the expected physical and emotional signs of wear, but morale had never dropped below any critical threshold.[187]

C. THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE

In addition to adaptation, von Lettow also expertly leveraged multiple networks within GEA, to include German colonists, the GEA indigenous population, and his Askari soldiers.[188] The Schutztruppe commander and his German officers established a mutual trust and shared identity with these groups, allowing them to capitalize on their knowledge of the terrain, access to resources, etc. One example is von Lettow's employment of Captain Tom von Prince, a fiercely patriotic, retired German officer with previous irregular fighting experience throughout Africa. Von Lettow knew von Prince from the military, and he quickly reconnected with him upon arriving in GEA. At the time, von Prince offered his support to von Lettow in the event of a British attack. When the British attacked, von Prince employed his loyal volunteer network of Africans and Germans against British targets in the Kilimanjaro region. Specifically, von Lettow ordered von Prince to, "'Destroy stations and railway lines. Cut telegraph wires; confuse

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[186] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 147.

[187] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 204–206.

[188] One contradiction was von Lettow's long running quarrels with Governor Schnee.

the enemy.'" On August 15, 1914, Von Prince's successful attack on Taveta, a small town on a spur line of the Uganda Railway, served as the first GEA ground attacks against the British.[189]

Much of the German colonial population resented Governor Schnee's unwillingness to militarily defend the colony, and supported von Lettow instead.[190] This support manifested itself in a variety of ways, including providing equipment and medicine to his Schutztruppe. According to von Lettow, "[W]hite and black women took to spinning by hand … suitable dye was obtained, which imparted a brownish-yellow colour, very inconspicuous both in the grass and in the bush, and therefore specially suitable for uniforms."[191] Existing factories also re-focused to support the war effort, and the Amani Biological Institute in Usambara began mass-producing quinine tablets from tree bark to support malaria treatment.[192] The accrual of these small acts created momentum and filled resource gaps for the Schutztruppe.

In another example of network management, von Lettow deliberately slowed the movement of his force in their retreat from central GEA to southern GEA in order to reinforce relations with the local native population. Von Lettow's Schutztruppe still numbered approximately ten thousand Askaris, many of whom served as porters for the actual combat troops. Due to the Schutztruppe's gradual loss of terrain, the influx of British troops, and British propaganda, some of the German East African native population, under pressure, had begun to side with the British. Von Lettow planned on retaking surrendered territory in the future and also required further indigenous support to supply his force and counter the British, so he proactively lobbied throughout the region to retain support prior to his withdrawal south.[193]

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[189] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 20–24.

[190] Ibid., 16.

[191] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), pp. 69–70.

[192] Ibid., 70–71.

[193] Edwin Palmer Hoyt, *Guerilla: Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck and Germany's East African Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 148.

Von Lettow and his German officers expertly motivated their indigenous Askari soldiers by instilling a sense of pride and esprit d'corps among them. Von Lettow observed, "It was not personal ambition to which we appealed; we sought to arouse and maintain a real sense of duty dictated by patriotism, and an ever growing feeling of comradeship… this lasting and pure motive remained unsoiled by any other purpose that inspired Europeans and Askari with that endurance and energy which the Protective Force [Schutztruppe] manifested until the end."[194] Even von Lettow's enemy recognized the impact of this, as evidenced by Major Meinertzhagen's statement, "We all under-estimated the fighting qualities of the German native troops... it speaks highly of German training and discipline... von Lettow has every cause for congratulations under harder conditions than we have experienced."[195]

Finally, von Lettow's irregular warfare feats required a certain maverick character trait—a combination of stubbornness, determination, and perseverance. Von Lettow understood that, "the supreme power in the Colony was in the hands of the Governor."[196] But, when Schnee ordered non-resistance, von Lettow, of course, attacked—and never stopped for the next four years.

Von Lettow acknowledged in his memoirs that, "Since the outbreak of war our communication with the outside world had been to all intents and purposes cut of"[197] Therefore, in essence, von Lettow operated in a complete policy–strategy guidance vacuum. Throughout, von Lettow never waivered from his personal philosophy: "to gain all we must risk all."[198] This required courage displayed in many forms, including defiance of his immediate senior political leadership, attacks across two colonial-state borders, a commitment to irregular warfare for an unknown amount of time, and an acceptance of himself and his men as East Africans while maintaining their, "Teutonic

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[194] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 68.

[195] Richard Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary*, 1st Edition (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 178.

[196] Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 21.

[197] Ibid., 34.

[198] Ibid., 41.

sense of loyalty peculiar to us Germans," in the absence of explicit communications from their Fatherland.[199]

In conclusion, this peripheral conflict of World War I presents a well-documented and practical example of irregular warfare application. By dissecting the Schutztruppe's four-year irregular warfare campaign and studying von Lettow himself, it becomes apparent that his adaptability, network management skills, and special character traits all contributed to the Schutztruppe's success against the British. Von Lettow's enduring presence throughout the conflict contrasts sharply with the British, who changed field commanders six times. Certainly, von Lettow offers a model for irregular warfare leadership in an austere theater of operations.[200]

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[199] Ibid., 326. Von Lettow even referred to himself as an "East African."

[200] The sheer toll in human life of the war in German East Africa remains largely unacknowledged in comparison to the more recognized tragedy of the European battlefield. This topic is beyond the scope of this chapter, but Edward Paice offers a fuller discussion of the matter in his Epilogue to *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa*.

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V. OTTO SKORZENY

Otto Skorzeny was one of the most intriguing characters of World War II—a commando extraordinaire dubbed "the most dangerous man in Europe" (Figure 7).[201] Skorzeny's military resume included combat on Germany's western and eastern fronts and key roles in strategic irregular warfare operations. In particular, Operations Oak, the rescue of Benito Mussolini, and Panzerfaust, the Horthy affair in Hungary, contributed to German national war aims and helped establish Skorzeny's legendary commando status. This chapter evaluates Skorzeny as a German irregular warfare practitioner by examining these cases and Skorzeny the man. Skorzeny proved that small, well-planned commando actions could achieve disproportionately high strategic results.[202] This, combined with his insightful observations, reveals a uniqueness perhaps best summarized by Skorzeny himself: "Like it or not, a new type of soldier has arisen: an organized adventurer. He must have some of the qualities of a guerrilla, a man of science and an inventor, of a scholar and psychologist."[203] Skorzeny's, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando*, serves as a primary source for the chapter.[204]

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[201] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 452.

[202] Skorzeny biographer Charles Foley noted, "[i]n the last twenty months of the Reich that was to last a thousand years he [Skorzeny] planned, directed and himself led a series of missions which were unparalleled in scope because they aimed at influencing the course not merely of a single battle but of the war." Charles Foley, *Commando Extraordinary: The Remarkable Exploits of Otto Skorzeny* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1954), 2.

[203] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 468.

[204] Skorzeny's memoirs appears to have served multiple purposes including defending the honor of his fellow Waffen-SS soldiers and the German military writ-large, explaining and defending Germany's military actions, describing his role in numerous operations, identifying significant betrayals that contributed to Germany's eventual defeat, and arguing the strategic importance of the commando raid and of the irregular warrior responsible for conducting it.

Figure 7. Otto Skorzeny

A. BACKGROUND AND EARLY CAREER

Skorzeny's youth informed his career as a soldier and irregular warfare commando. Like Adolf Hitler, Skorzeny was born an Austrian, but identified as German.[205] In 1938, at the age of 30, Skorzeny rejoiced when the National-Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) won a plebiscite in Austria, which established an official union with Germany.[206] A loss would have meant victory for Soviet-backed communists, which Skorzeny viewed as Europe's greatest threat. While earning an engineering degree in Vienna, Skorzeny participated in sport dueling, which he believed served "to teach courage, coolness and will"—traits he would later rely on.[207] Skorzeny's ideological drive and physical prowess both aided his future military career.

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[205] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 12–13.

[206] Ibid., 31.

[207] Ibid., 13. It was during a duel that Skorzeny received his ever-recognizable facial scar, resulting in the nickname "scar face."

In 1939, at the age of 31, too old for the Luftwaffe, Skorzeny joined the Waffen-SS as an engineer officer. Although organizationally separate from the Wehrmacht, the Waffen-SS was frequently subordinate to it during operations. Waffen-SS soldiers were known for higher standards of discipline, physicality, and performance than their army brethren, and according to Skorzeny, trust, comradeship, mutual respect, and freedom of conscience characterized this all-volunteer unit.[208]

Two occurrences in Skorzeny's early military career proved influential to his later irregular warfare success. After serving in France, Skorzeny saw his first combat action in the Balkans in April 1941.[209] While there on patrol, Skorzeny's small force encountered a larger Yugoslav unit. Rather than engage in a firefight, however, Skorzeny showed restraint and in doing so, captured five enemy officers and over sixty soldiers.[210] He read the situation and realized violence was unnecessary to obtain their surrender.

Next, Skorzeny fought in support of General Heinz Guderian's Second Panzer Group in Operation Barbarossa, Germany's surprise invasion of the Soviet Union.[211]

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[208] Ibid., 37. The Waffen-SS began as a small, elite bodyguard unit for Adolf Hitler. Recruited from cities around the country, the unit only numbered 280 men as of 1929. At that time, Hitler appointed Heinrich Himmler as Reichsführer SS and ordered him to mold the SS into an elite Nazi party troop consisting of the highest quality soldiers. By January 1933, the SS had grown to 52,000 members. It developed organizationally into specialized components. The Allgemeine (General) SS consisted of men who did not belong to any special branches and whose duty was to remain on call for domestic security requirements during the pre-war years. Next, Himmler established the SS security service, known as the Sicherheitsdienst, or SD. The SD was the official intelligence and counterespionage agency of the Nazi Party. Two national-level police organizations fell under control of the SS, the Ordnungspolizei and the Sicherheitzpolizei, both with subdivisions. The final components of the SS were the SS Verfügungstruppen and the SS Totenkopfverbände. The Verfügungstruppen served as an elite combat formation, under the operational control of the Wermacht, but organizationally external to the Wermacht. The SS Totenkopfverbände, or SS Death's Head detachments, guarded Germany's concentration camps, but were also employed in other roles such as policing newly occupied areas within the Reich. George H. Stein, *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War, 1939–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), xxv-xxxiv. The Waffen SS reached "a peak strength of thirty-eight divisions and some 600,000 men," many of who were recruited from outside of Germany. According to historian George Stein, "The German offensives of the early war years could have succeeded without the participation of the Waffen SS, but the defense of the Third Reich would have collapsed much earlier had it not been for the elite SS divisions." George H. Stein, *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War, 1939–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), 286–288. The author acknowledges that historical facts often point to the Waffen-SS "freedom from conscience" based on a known record of war crimes.

[209] Ibid., 57–62.

[210] Ibid., 60.

[211] Ibid., 106. In August 1941, Skorzeny was decorated with the Iron Cross, Second Class following his artillery unit's success against Russian enemies. Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 106.

After four months, Skorzeny was sent home with a shrapnel injury, but not before taking note of Russian partisan activity.[212] Skorzeny observed, "As in Napoleon's time our large formations were harried on their flanks or from behind by special counteroffensives and partisan units, which were impossible to find in the immensity of the land."[213] As a future special unit commander, Skorzeny would employ his own partisan forces while carrying out guerrilla operations on the Danube River in Hungary and Romania later in the war.[214]

B. ADVANCEMENT

Following his recovery and additional tours of duty in the Netherlands and Russia, Skorzeny's career advanced quickly. In April 1943, due to his unique attributes and early battlefield accomplishments, as well as an old connection, Skorzeny was named as the Hauptsturmführer and commander of the Friedenthal Special Duties Battalion and the "Seehof" School.[215] Skorzeny's role was to be both unit organizer and commander, providing him an opportunity to test his "unorthodox ideas for a more daring war."[216] Initially, Special Duties Unit Friedenthal consisted of 300 men, 85 percent of whom were German and 15 percent Dutch, Flemish, or Hungarian "ethnic-Germans." All had volunteered from the Waffen-SS.[217] The Sonderverband z.b.V. Friedenthal, as it became known, was designated for special employment, "meaning that any chief of an element of

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[212] Ibid., 126–127.

[213] Ibid., 137–138

[214] Ibid., 194.

[215] Ibid., 137–138. Skorzeny's attributes included technical skills, impressive physical presence, and an innovative and creative mind as exhibited in the following statement, "I was convinced that if we wanted to achieve a decision as in the years 1939/40, we must turn to daring methods and the tactic of surprise as we had in those years. We had to consider the entire nature of the war and discover and produce new weapons; weapons which were especially useful for specific purposes." Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 138. According Admiral (Ret.) and historian William H. McRaven, "Skorzeny's old friend from the Anschluss days, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, recommended Skorzeny be placed in charge of the new unit, and on 20 April 1943, Skorzeny assumed command of the Amt VI-S [Department of the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA) under which Skorzeny's new unit was placed) and was promoted to captain." William H. McRaven, *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 165. Skorzeny's connected to Kaltenbrunner is verified by Skorzeny himself in his Memoirs.

[216] Ibid., 139.

[217] Ibid., 141.

the armed forces could call on them for special military operations."[218] But, according to Skorzeny, "from July 1943 I always received my orders directly from the OKW [Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, or Supreme Command of the Armed Forces], or from Hitler personally."[219]

In his new role, Skorzeny planned and/or executed a number of irregular warfare operations. Two in particular, deserve close attention. Operation Oak entailed a tactically innovative and strategically important rescue operation. It is best understood with a brief background examination.

C. OPERATION OAK

Up until July 1943, Italy, under the leadership of Benito Mussolini, had been Germany's prime wartime European ally. Unlike the Germans, however, Italy had not fared so well militarily. Skorzeny elaborated:

> From 1940 the poorly equipped, inadequately fed and badly led Italian troops went from one catastrophe to the next, in Ethiopia, on the French border, in Greece, in Albania, in Cyrenaica, in Libya, Somaliland, Eritrea, in the Sudan and on the banks of the Don in Russia—three years filled with defeats and huge losses, with many killed, wounded, captured and missing in these far-away lands, and as well often unwarranted reproaches.[220]

On July 29, 1943, U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower publicly "encouraged the Italian people to rise up against the German Army and promised allied help to free Italy."[221] A few days before, Italian King Victor Emmanuel III had ordered Mussolini arrested. Naturally, Hitler feared that the new Italian government would desert its ally, thus paving the way for an allied advance from the south.[222] Furthermore, Hitler stated he

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[218] Ibid., 144.

[219] Ibid., 144. Note: beginning in 1943, Skorzeny would visit Hitler's Wolfschanze on nine separate occasions and speak with Hitler directly on six of these occasions.

[220] Ibid., 238.

[221] Ibid., 236.

[222] Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944*, 1st ed., The Liberation Trilogy, v. 2 (New York: Henry Holt, 2007), 142.

"did not want Italy to become a trap for our soldiers."[223] Italy's new government surrendered secretly and unconditionally to the Anglo–Americans on September 3, confirming Hitler's fears.[224]

For Operation Oak, Hitler personally ordered Skorzeny to find and free his friend and ally, Mussolini.[225] Skorzeny tracked the deposed dictator from the island of Ponza, to Santa Maddalena, and to his final holding location, the Hotel Imperatore on Gran Sasso, all while maintaining strict operational security.[226] In the course of conducting aerial reconnaissance missions, Skorzeny's Heinkel 111 aircraft crashed. Miraculously, his injuries consisted of only three broken ribs.[227] Based on further reconnaissance, and terrain and resource limitations, Skorzeny concluded the only method to execute the raid was to crash-land gliders on the sloped alpine meadow adjacent to the hotel.[228]

On September 12, 1943, Skorzeny and his 108-man force crash-landed twelve DFS 230 gliders in the vicinity of the hotel. A supporting force had isolated the objective by securing the cable car station at the bottom of Gran Sasso Mountain, severing its communications in the process. Within four minutes the compound was secure and Skorzeny had control of Mussolini—all without firing a shot.[229] Shortly thereafter,

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[223] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 230.

[224] Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944*, 1st ed., The Liberation Trilogy, v. 2 (New York: Henry Holt, 2007), 189.

[225] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 230. According to Skorzeny, Hitler stated, "you must risk everything to carry out this action, which is now most important to the conduct of the war."

[226] Ibid., 230. The Hotel Imperatore was a mountain hotel at an elevation of 2,212 meters and only accessible by cable car from the town of Assergi. A small meadow lay adjacent to the hotel that Skorzeny managed to capture aerial photographs of, and which would serve as a landing site for his gliders. Notably, his reconnaissance photos did not reveal the true slope of the meadow nor a number of boulders within it. Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 254–255. Hitler emphasized the importance of secrecy and ordered that neither the Germany military headquarters in Italy nor the German embassy in Rome was to learn of the exact mission.

[227] Ibid., 249. The Heinkel 111 was originally believed to have been shot down by two British fighter planes, but a subsequent investigation revealed that the fuel it had used was of extremely poor quality, consisting of approximately 30% water.

[228] Ibid., 255. Skorzeny assessed that an attack on the cable car would sacrifice the element of surprise and that a parachute operation risked great dispersion upon landing. Helicopters were unavailable.

[229] Ibid., 267.

Skorzeny escorted Mussolini off Gran Sasso in a Fieseler 126 Storch aircraft, first taking him to Rome, and then Vienna, before a celebratory meeting with Hitler in Germany.[230]

1. Analysis

The success of Operation Oak can be attributed to Skorzeny's daring plan, as well as his creative techniques for mitigating risk. Skorzeny ordered a "fundamental ban" on all participants firing their weapons before him.[231] He included Italian carabinieri General Soleti on the raid in order to "momentarily confuse" the defending carabinieri soldiers.[232] These unique features of the plan worked. The defending force reacted indecisively and with limited aggression.

2. Importance

Skorzeny's raid had larger implications.[233] In his book, *To Dare and to Conquer: Special Operations and the Destiny of Nations, from Achilles to Al Qaeda*, military historian Derek Leebaert highlighted the threefold strategic utility of Operation Oak as having deflated the Allies, validated Germany's image of human and technological superiority, and enabled the creation of a social republic in northern Italy to continue fighting the Allies.[234] According to Leebaert, "No amount of army divisions could have pulled this off."[235] Winston Churchill supported Leebaert's view, stating, "[t]he rescue of Mussolini enabled the Germans to set up in the north a rival Government to Badoglio's…

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[230] William H. McRaven, *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 187. The exfiltration of Mussolini proved to be just as daring as Skorzeny's glider infiltration. Not only did the Storch overcome a challenging landing on Gran Sasso, but also it almost crashed on takeoff with Skorzeny and Mussolini onboard.

[231] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 261.

[232] Ibid., 260 and 268. And William H. McRaven, *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 189.

[233] Ibid., 263. Skorzeny himself understood these implications, as evidenced by his statement, "This operation will go down as unique in military history, not only because you have enormous technical difficulties to overcome, but because this operation is of quite considerable political significance."

[234] Derek Leebaert, *To Dare and to Conquer: Special Operations and the Destiny of Nations, from Achilles to Al Qaeda*, 1st ed. (New York: Back Bay Books, 2007), 483. Note: Churchill validated the third and most important of these points in his book, *The Second World War*. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, 4th ed., vol. Book IX (London: Cassell and Company Limited, 1952), 103–104.

[235] Ibid., 481.

[which helped enable Italy] to become the battleground of some of the fiercest fighting in the war."[236]

D. OPERATION PANZERFAUST

On September 10, 1944, Skorzeny was again summoned to the Wolfsschanze to meet with Hitler on an important matter at a critical time.[237] Recent events had not boded well for Germany. The Americans and English had landed at Normandy on June 6 and were advancing from the west. In late June, a four-front Russian offensive broke through German lines in six places, tearing a 250-mile gap in the German eastern defense.[238] July 20 witnessed an assassination attempt on Hitler.[239] In the south, Turkey had broken off diplomatic relations with Germany on August 2, and the Soviets had saturated Romania with troops.[240] By September, Romania was completely under Soviet control, transitioning from German ally to enemy. Hungary, another German ally and buffer state to Soviet aggression, was wavering. As stated by Skorzeny, "Admiral [Miklos] Horthy

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[236] Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, 4th ed., vol. Book IX (London: Cassell and Company Limited, 1952), 103–104. Following the freeing of Mussolini, a significant resistance movement loyal to Nazi Germany continued to operate in northern Italy until the end of the war. This was known as the Italian Social Republic. However, the criticality of Mussolini himself to this resistance remains questionable. According to Joseph Goebbels' diary passage on November 8, 1943, "nothing is to be expected of either [Italian] Fascism or the Duce [Mussolini]. The Duce hasn't the faintest idea as to his real position. He overestimates the power of the Fascist party. . . . He actually thinks he can persuade the Italian nation to re-enter the military struggle on our side. I think that is absolutely out of the question." (Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries*, Translated by Louis P. Lochner (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), 574.)

[237] The Wolfsschanze, or Wolf's Lair, was one of Hitler's secure wartime headquarters facilities.

[238] Alexander Werth, Russia at War: 1941–1945 (New York, NY: Carroll and Graf Publishers, Inc., 1964), 862–864. This Soviet offensive resulted in twenty-five to twenty-eight German divisions destroyed and constituted "one of the greatest victories of the war—and one from which the Germans could never recover." Ibid., 864–865. German Army Group Center, in its entirety, was destroyed. William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1959), 1085.

[239] William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1959), 1028–1054. Operation Valkyrie was an assassination attempt via suitcase bomb against Hitler by German Colonel Klaus Philip Schenk von Stauffenberg.

[240] Otto Skorzeny, My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 306.

undertook some reshuffling in his ministry that suggested a change of course politically, and indeed in a pro-Soviet sense."[241]

1. The Mission

Hitler again placed his faith in Skorzeny with a direct order to execute one, and if necessary, a second special mission to restore the Hungarian–German alliance.[242] The first mission entailed kidnapping Admiral Horthy's son, Niklas, who was known to be in secret communication with agents of Tito and Stalin. On October 15, while Niklas met discreetly with Tito's agents in Budapest, the local SS commander in Budapest captured Niklas while Skorzeny and a small detachment fended off Niklas's personal security element.[243] Unfortunately, this audacious act failed to achieve its intended effect. Instead, "At 2 p.m. Hungarian radio broadcast a special announcement by Horthy, in which he said that 'Hungary had asked the Soviet Union for a separate peace,'" thus necessitating the execution of Operation Panzerfaust (bazooka).[244]

2. The Plan

Operation Panzerfaust involved taking and occupying the Burgberg militarily in order to prevent a Hungarian peace deal with the Soviet Union.[245] Skorzeny insisted on spilling as little blood as possible to prevent unnecessary negative repercussions for German–Hungarian relations.[246] Skorzeny recognized that, "Hungarian soldiers had been battling a common enemy [Soviet Union] since June 1941, the same one which

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[241] Ibid., 307. In an effort to shore up Hungarian support in late August 1943, Hitler had sent General Guderian on a secret mission to meet with Admiral Miklos Horthy, who ruled Hungary at the time. Guderian's post-meeting assessment, however, was not favorable for the future of the alliance. Ibid., 310.

[242] Ibid., 311.

[243] Ibid., 312–313.

[244] Ibid., 314.

[245] Ibid., 314. Note: Operation Panzerfaust earned its name from "a recently-developed anti-tank weapon with a hollow-charge projectile." Ibid., 318. The Burgberg, "a fortification more than three kilometers long and at least 600 meters wide, towered above the Danube." Ibid., 315. It defenses were believed to have been reinforced with 3,000 men, and "the palace was occupied by a regiment which had light and heavy weapons at its disposal." Ibid., 316.

[246] Ibid., 29.

devastated Hungary in 1920–21."[247] Skorzeny had faith that this history would aid his effort, but to capitalize on it, he again ordered that, "Not a single shot was to be fired from our side. As well there was a strict ban on replying to single shots."[248] Additionally, Skorzeny had previously dissuaded a German police commander from employing an excessively destructive 650mm howitzer cannon, dubbed "Thor," as part of the raid.[249]

Once again, Skorzeny's plan worked. German forces, including large numbers of ethnic Hungarians, surrounded the Burgberg and simultaneously assaulted it on the morning of October 16. Entry was obtained in two ways: a parachute battalion breached the ministry of defense through a tunnel on the east side of the compound while Skorzeny led an armored column through the front gate, from which his assault force secured the building. Limited fighting occurred during the thirty-minute operation, but quickly ended when Skorzeny's men fired warning shots from a new and fearsome anti-tank weapon known as the Panzerfaust.[250] Skorzeny had accomplished another unbelievable mission.

E. SIMILARITIES

Operations Oak and Panzerfaust distinguished Skorzeny within the lineage of German irregular warfare professionals. Both operations demonstrated how single commando raids could achieve strategic success well beyond their tactical results.

1. Operation Oak: Psychological Disarmament

The liberation of Benito Mussolini at least partially reinforced Italian-fascist identity and its alliance with Germany, thus temporarily buttressing a critical German

[247] Ibid., 315.

[248] Ibid., 317.

[249] Ibid., 314.

[250] Ibid., 320. The entire operation took its name from this weapon. Of note, total losses for both sides were only seven dead and twenty-seven wounded.

vulnerability against the ongoing Anglo–American offensive.[251] Furthermore, Skorzeny revealed personal traits emblematic of an irregular warrior. His imaginative and daring infiltration plan overcame environmental challenges while retaining the element of surprise. The inclusion of General Soleti and Skorzeny's orders not to shoot, countering conventional military inclinations, served to psychologically disarm the defending Italians. Finally, Skorzeny's desire to personally lead reconnaissance missions and the raid maximized his control and ability to inspire.

2. Panzerfaust: Strength through Restraint

Operation Panzerfaust netted strategic gains on an equal scale to those achieved in Operation Oak. Skorzeny's capture of the Burgberg shored up Admiral Horthy's loyalties, to the degree that he halted Hungarian peace overtures with the Soviet Union. Thus, Germany could again rely on its eastern neighbor for defense, which directly supported Germany's withdrawal from the east. It was Skorzeny's bold approach and orders not to shoot that enabled the success of Panzerfaust, and his recognition of the psychological effects of the Panzerfaust weapon. In both operations, Skorzeny showed restraint and respect for his enemy, against whom he wished as little harm as necessary.

F. INSPIRATIONS

As much as he was a practitioner of irregular warfare, Skorzeny was also a student of the subject. British Special Air Service (SAS) operations in 1941 had inspired Skorzeny. In November of that year, SAS commandos executed a raid 200 miles behind German front lines in North Africa in an attempt to assassinate General Erwin Rommel and facilitate Operation Crusader, the British attempt to relieve Tobruk of German

[251] According to World War II historian William L. Shirer, "By the early autumn of 1943, Adolf Hitler could well claim to have mastered the gravest threats to the Third Reich. The fall of Mussolini and the unconditional surrender of the Badoglio government in Italy might easily have led, as Hitler and his generals for a few crucial weeks feared, to exposing the southern borders of Germany to direct Allied attack and opening the way—from northern Italy—into the weakly held Balkans in the very rear of the German armies fighting for their lives in southern Russia." William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1959), 1006.

siege.[252] Skorzeny observed, "It especially struck me that the British included a special commando operation in [the midst of] a conventional attack operation, which could have played a decisive role."[253]

Skorzeny also took note of Soviet partisan operations while serving on the eastern front. Although slow to take off, the Soviet partisan movement grew into a decisive supporting effort for the Red Army's offensive into Germany. Scholars estimate that between the years 1941 and 1944, the partisans accounted for almost one million Germans killed and thousands of destroyed German locomotives, combat vehicles, and equipment.[254] Skorzeny recalled, "we were fired on by groups of partisans while transitioning the woods through which we had to pass. They were still small units, made up of soldiers who had escaped our encirclement and escaped prisoners… Of every twenty villages we occupied two or three, while the others offered refuge to the partisans… .[255] Later, in the role of historian, Skorzeny summarized the importance of the partisans to the Soviet counter-offensive:

> Still, it must be said that the catastrophe that followed the assault by 200 Soviet divisions against Feldmarschall Busch's 34 divisions on June 22, 1944 was prepared by the partisans and special commando units of the Red Army. On June 19 and 20 alone more than 12,000 acts of sabotage were carried out behind Busch's lines: bridges, railway lines, power plants were blown up, telephone and telegraph lines were cut. It was the largest operation in partisan war to that point, and as a result our units' lines of communications and supply had been almost completely cut off when the huge attack began. From a tactical and strategic point of view, it was the partisan and commando units which achieved total victory.[256]

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[252] Erwin Rommel, *The Rommel Papers*, ed. B.H. Liddell Hart (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1953). Note: Previously held by Italian forces, the British captured Tobruk in January 1941. Ibid., 94. Tobruk was one of the largest fortresses in North Africa and was strategically important due to its access to the Mediterranean Sea. Ibid., 154.

[253] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 149.

[254] Alexander Werth, *Russia at War: 1941–1945* (New York, NY: Carroll and Graf Publishers, Inc., 1964), 718. Note: Russian partisans operated in three primary areas: the Russian forest country (Leningrad, Porkhov, and Briask), Belorussia, and northern areas of the Ukraine. The height of the movement, 1943–1944, saw approximately half-a-million armed partisans in the Soviet Union. Ibid., 726.

[255] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 109.

[256] Ibid., 305.

Skorzeny appreciated the value of partisan activity in irregular warfare.

G. A NECESSARY OPTION

In his book, *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Lucien Vandebroucke warned that strategic special operations are "high risk ventures" in which failure means the loss of national prestige.[257] His rather dim view is drawn from four examples of unsuccessful U.S. special operations, from which Vandenbroucke identified inadequate intelligence, poor coordination, wishful thinking, and inappropriate intervention in mission execution as reasons for failure. Skorzeny proved, however, that such mistakes could be avoided and that when properly executed, strategic special operations are worth the accompanying risks. Skorzeny understood the potential of special units like his own, asserting,

> Perfectly equipped and trained, determined battle groups, which are intelligently led, should always be capable of creating an unexpected situation, perhaps even—as I have said—before a conflict breaks out. During hostilities, commando units of technicians and propagandists could create confusion and perhaps chaos.[258]

Skorzeny's actions upheld a pattern within the German irregular warfare tradition—war waged with respect for the enemy, void of irrational emotion and traditional propagandistic views—clinical in nature. Above all, Skorzeny respected the power of individuals like himself, concluding, "They say that in a future war the 'human' factor will be seen as secondary. This is not my view."[259]

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[257] Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4.

[258] Otto Skorzeny, *My Commando Operations: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1995), 466.

[259] Ibid., 465.

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VI. FRIEDRICH AUGUST FREIHERR VON DER HEYDTE

German professor Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte's 1972 book, *Modern Irregular Warfare: In Defense Policy and as a Military Phenomenon*, serves both as a theoretical study of irregular warfare and practical guide.[260] Von der Heydte (Figure 8) referenced multiple examples of irregular war from places such as Greece, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yugoslavia, Latin America, Vietnam, China, and West Germany. West Germany, in particular, encountered Soviet "active measures" during the Cold War—in the form of anti-nuclear/anti-industrial terrorism—similar to the sort of covert action more recently practiced by Russia in eastern Ukraine.[261] Von der Heydte offered a framework with which to approach irregular war. As a result of prohibitions on the use of force in international law, coupled with the threat posed by nuclear war, he acknowledged that, "Irregular is gradually displacing conventional 'large-scale' warfare."[262] As an alternative to conventional and nuclear conflict, he proposed the use of irregular warfare as a strategic model—one that is militarily limited, politically total, and violent in nature. It is the current, potential application of this model, combined with von der Heydte's deep, conceptual study of irregular warfare that makes his book so valuable.

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[260] Friedrich August von der Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare: In Defense Policy and as a Military Phenomenon*, 1st English ed. (New York, N.Y: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1986). This book was first published in German in 1972.

[261] Active measures are here defined as, "an array of overt and covert techniques for influencing events and behavior in, and the actions of, foreign countries . . . includes attempts to influence the policies of another government, undermine confidence in its leaders and institutions, disrupt relations with other nations, and discredit and weaken governmental and non-governmental opponents." Roy Godson and Richard Schultz, "Active Measures in Soviet Strategy," *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman editors (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine Publishing Co., 1986) 207.

[262] Von der Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare*, xxxiv.

Figure 8. Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte

A. BACKGROUND

During World War II, then-Captain von der Heydte commanded the 1st Battalion, 3rd *Fallschirmjäger* Regiment in the Battle of Crete (1941).[263] This first-ever, mass airborne invasion was Germany's attempt to cement its Balkan campaign success that had thus far culminated with victories in Greece and Yugoslavia.[264] Crete's strategic value stemmed from its location in the eastern Mediterranean.

Following the fall of Greece, Allied ground forces reinforced their defense of Crete, augmented by an underestimated partisan resistance force. The British Royal Navy dominated the surrounding Mediterranean Sea. In light of Allied disposition, the Germans chose to attack with airborne troops supported by the Luftwaffe, testing the new—and thus irregular—tactic of airborne envelopment.

[263] Heydte, Baron von der. *Daedalus Returned*. Trans. W. Stanley Moss. London: Hutchinson and Company: 1958, 20.

[264] John Keegan, The Second World War (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1989), 160.

Von der Heydte's unit was responsible for capturing the northern town of Canea and securing nearby Suda Bay. From this objective and others, the Germans intended to expand their dominance of the island "like a spreading oil-spot."[265] Beginning on May 20, and over the course of eight days, the Germans ultimately prevailed, but they suffered enormous casualties in the process. As a result, Hitler resolved to ban future large-scale airborne operations whereas the Allies chose to further develop and employ their own such capabilities. Von der Heydte, "an untypical parachutist by reason both of his aristocratic disdain for Nazism and of his marked intellectuality," chronicled the Battle of Crete in *Daedalus Returned*—the title indicative of his lifelong interest in the island's mythological Greek history.[266, 267]

Following World War II and a distinguished career in the post-war German Bundeswehr, von der Heydte entered academia. There, he employed his extensive military experience, observations of Soviet irregular warfare tactics throughout West Germany, and exhaustive study to publish his groundbreaking overview of irregular warfare.

B. CENTRAL IDEAS

Von der Heydte pointedly depicted the essence of irregular warfare as "war out of the dark."[268] Its irregular nature is characterized by small groups of combatants, where success depends on the accumulation of many small, unconventional-type operations over time.[269] These may include: robberies, acts of terrorism, sabotage, bombings, and other attacks. Superiority in movement is prioritized over firepower, and stealth over overwhelming mass.[270]

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[265] Baron von der Heydte, *Daedalus Returned*, Trans. W. Stanley Moss (London: Hutchinson and Company: 1958), 43.

[266] John Keegan, The Second World War (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1989), 167.

[267] Baron von der Heydte, *Daedalus Returned*, Trans. W. Stanley Moss (London: Hutchinson and Company: 1958), 11–19.

[268] Ibid., 3.

[269] Ibid., 62. Von der Heydte compares these combatants to "swarms of nasty wasps."

[270] Ibid., 3–4.

1. The Purpose of Irregular Warfare

The purpose of irregular war "is not only a *military victory*, but also a total *political victory*."[271] Perhaps most important, von der Heydte argued that irregular war is "real war," and as such, long preceded the current concept of conventional war that is restricted by, and tied to, international law. Irregular warfare can include multiple types of violence, not all of which are military in nature. After all, "It was not the military which created war—it was war which led to the development of the military."[272]

2. Challenges to International Law and Combination Warfare

Von der Heydte claimed that the phenomenon of irregular warfare challenges international law and conventional strategy. With respect to the former, war is an exceptional condition, whereas peace is considered the norm. In an effort to control the exceptional condition, international law requires both the recognition of armed groups in conflict and the expression of their intent, both of which may be disadvantageous to those who wage irregular war at various times. Von der Heydte believed, "[t]he laws and norms of war are oriented to the 'large' war, 'conventional' war, not irregular war."[273] This remains true today.

Von der Heydte contended that international law is linked to military strategy, which in turn is understood as conforming to international law. Thus, conventional military strategy is often at odds with irregular strategy, wherein "[t]he adversary is not decisively beaten, but instead he is decisively outmaneuvered."[274] Strategy within irregular warfare, however, is not unique, but rather, "[t]he application of *generally* valid maxims of a strategy of war under the *special circumstances* of an irregular war."[275] Irregular war is fundamentally a war of attrition, fought indirectly, with significant psychological factors; an idea serves as the primary motivator for those waging it.

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[271] Ibid., 61.

[272] Ibid., 7.

[273] Ibid., 25.

[274] Ibid., 37.

[275] Ibid., 69.

Von der Heydte suggested that only recently had warfare fractured to form a spectrum consisting of irregular, conventional, and nuclear war.[276] The advent of nuclear weapons created a new, extreme version of warfare as compared to the more mainstream, or conventional, forms of warfare witnessed in the two world wars. Similarly, irregular warfare also represents an extreme form of warfare, based on its tactical variances and legal incongruities. Irregular warfare is traditionally considered the tool of the weak, whereas conventional and nuclear warfare are tools of the strong.[277] In reality though, powerful nations maintain the capability to employ all three types. The ability to synergistically accomplish this in the future will likely increasingly differentiate success from failure.

3. Reasons for Employment

Von der Heydte observed that the employment of irregular warfare may be situationally dependent. According to him, "It [may be] advisable to begin a war, which one wants to conduct as a conventional war, as an irregular war, or to begin a war, in which one is firmly determined from the outset to use nuclear weapons, with a conventional attack."[278] It may also be worthwhile to employ two types of war simultaneously, such as the hybrid conventional–irregular strategy that the North Vietnamese employed against the United States in South Vietnam (1965–1973). In any case, an aggressor benefits from concealing the type of war that he intends to employ as well as the type of war that he intends to transition to because the ambiguity associated with the enemy's knowledge of this information directly corresponds to strategic advantage.

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[276] Ibid., 47. Von der Heydte further notes, "In more than one respect, irregular warfare is the total opposite of nuclear war . . . One might, to mention one example, speak of the primacy of fire-power over movement in nuclear war, and the primacy of movement over fire-power in irregular war." Von der Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare*, 60.

[277] Ibid., 64. Von der Heydte points out that the "weaker force" in irregular war frequently receives support from a "stronger power."

[278] Ibid., 50.

Next, von der Heydte conceptualized irregular war as a "war of blurred contours."[279] For example, "in modern irregular warfare, all inhabitants of a state are potentially combatants... groups [as opposed to soldiers] confront each other," and these groups are only "legally limited by a few primitive humanitarian principles, which form the core of the law of war."[280] As the primary combatants in irregular war, "[g]uerilleros are, in their own self-conception, neither soldiers nor civilians. Instead, they make claim to a special status, which is not that of a soldier bound by the conventions of a 'large' war, but also not that of an unjustified fighter, nor of a civilian who merely surrenders to the laws and courts of the adversary."[281]

4. The Guerrilla's Objective

With no distinct battlefield or front, it is a goal of the guerrillas who wage irregular war to maintain unlimited freedom of movement. Instead of occupying space, von der Heydte spoke of "contaminated" space that requires the enemy's over-application of resources to counter. The contaminated areas carry an, "incalculable risk for the enemy . . . death lurks in them."[282] For those with firsthand experience in insurgency and counterinsurgency, this description rings true. Von der Heydte also differentiates between internal "bases" that must be small, secret, and dispersed and "outside" bases that can be larger and supplied by third parties.

Von der Heydte depicted irregular war as "war in peace," where the transition from peace to war is often blurred.[283] In this way, irregular war differs from more conventional conflicts. Because they are typically wars of attrition, irregular wars tend to last longer as well. As a result, he maintained, "Freedom of action in time sometimes is of even greater importance in irregular warfare than freedom of action in space."[284]

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[279] Ibid., 67.

[280] Ibid., 70–71.

[281] Ibid., 71. Although not distinctly stated, Von der Heydte's writing would suggest that he recognizes that in some cases, soldiers do wage irregular war, but typically this occurs in later stages as an irregular force transitions to "open combat."

[282] Ibid., 77.

[283] Ibid., 83.

[284] Ibid., 89.

Mobility is emphasized over firepower. The two fundamental types of infiltration distinctive to irregular mobility are: the infiltration of unfamiliar terrain and the infiltration of populations.[285]

C. VON DER HEYDTE'S THREE-PHASE MODEL

Von der Heydte acknowledged Mao Tse-Tung's three-phased model of irregular warfare (organization, insurgency, and the war of maneuver), while presenting one of his own. Von der Heydte's version consisted of a preparation phase, a covert-combat phase, and a transition-to-open-combat phase. Von der Heydte's book and model differ from Mao's book, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, and from Mao's model.[286] First, von der Heydte's book addressed irregular war more broadly than Mao's. The latter's writing focused on the situation he faced in agrarian China. Second, von der Heydte's model addressed the preparation phase of irregular warfare in more detail. Third, von der Heydte's model intentionally did not include "open combat," otherwise considered a war of maneuver or conventional war.

1. The Preparation Phase

a. Conspiracy

Von der Heydte's preparation phase begins with conspiracy. The conspiratorial foundation includes sworn oaths, development of cadre, initial battle plan, network development, and emergence of a charismatic leader who is capable of and eager to lead.[287] Von der Heydte differentiated between conspiracies from within, outside, above, and below. Each carries unique contextual implications such as where support is derived from, whom the irregular force consists of, and what the irregular force intends to target. Von der Heydte identified the historical importance of officers, priests, party bureaucrats, and students to the conspiracy.

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[285] Ibid., 96–97.

[286] Mao Tse-Tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1961).

[287] Von der Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare*, 107–109.

b. Propaganda

Propaganda, often in the form of subversion, has an important role in the preparation phase. Propaganda's function is threefold: "[First] to arm the ranks of the first cadre intellectually and morally for what is coming... [second to] proliferate the idea, on behalf of which irregular war is to be waged, among broad layers of the population, and win new members or friends for the movement… [and third], it should weaken the adversary's power and will to resist."[288] Propaganda is psychological combat designed to lay the groundwork for the next phase.

c. Training

Training and supply requirements are inherent to the preparation phase. Training priorities may include physical training, vocational training, and all forms of combat.[289] Notably, "Sometimes guerilleros are trained by their later [future] adversary."[290] Irregular war's equipment requirement calculations must be done more carefully than in "large" war due to the general lack of dedicated supply channels. This necessitates more varied sources of procurement, including grey and/or black markets, third party actors, and battlefield recovery operations.[291] Storage of supplies must also be given careful consideration and typically requires heavy redundancy.[292] These logistics issues speak to the dangerous tendency to underestimate the complexity of irregular warfare in comparison to large-scale conventional operations.

2. The Covert-Combat Phase

The covert-combat phase begins with the first violent acts—characterized as "combat in the dark."[293] Covert combat is still *real* combat. The covert distinction

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[288] Ibid., 121.

[289] Ibid., 140.

[290] Ibid., 141. The United States military has experienced this on multiple occasions, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[291] Ibid., 145. Battlefield recovery is the capture of enemy equipment, for later use, through raids, ambushes, and other operations.

[292] Ibid., 147–151.

[293] Ibid., 155.

implies that the attacker employs a high degree of cover to safeguard his identity.[294] The goals of covert acts are two-fold: to wear down the enemy so that he is incapable of sustaining subsequent attacks in the next phase; and to separate the enemy from the population psychologically.[295] The continuation of all the actions of the first phase into the second is of great importance because each phase adds to those of the previous phase but does not replace them, creating a natural continuity.[296]

a. Terrorism

Covert combat encompasses terrorism, sabotage, assassinations, and raids. Long before it received serious global attention, von der Heydte recognized terrorism as a legitimate warfare tactic, stating, "[i]n terrorism, the criminal act becomes an act of war."[297] The first purpose of terrorism is to intimidate and scare the enemy while convincing the population of the enemy's weakness. The second purpose is to provoke the enemy into counter-terror or overly aggressive retaliatory measures.[298] Acts of terror can range from explosions and arson to kidnapping and vandalism. Von der Heydte conceded, however, that terrorism by itself rarely succeeds in accomplishing strategic objectives.[299]

b. Sabotage

Sabotage, or the "premeditated, deliberate hindrance, disruption, or destruction of a business, factory, or a transportation, supply, or communications facility by means of deliberate damage, usually—but not always—by employing violence," aims to achieve

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[294] Ibid., 155. Von der Heydte cited a 1967 memorandum of the Führungsakademie der deutschen Bundeswehr: "[Covert combat is] probably the oldest of all forms of combat and kinds of war . . . With covert combat, violence is employed for the first time, at the lowest levels."

[295] Ibid., 156. Von der Heydte further described the purpose of covert combat as, " . . . psychological warfare. It is intended to win over new followers to the guerilleros' idea, and win new fighters . . . it is intended to frighten and intimidate those who can not be won over . . . at the beginning of the covert combat, the *mass* of the population is usually *not* ready to actively support the guerillero." Ibid., 159.

[296] Ibid., 157.

[297] Ibid., 182.

[298] Ibid., 182–183.

[299] Ibid., 184.

material effects as opposed to the psychological effects sought through terrorism.[300] Sabotage can be violent or non-violent, and its employment may only require a single individual to carry out. Subtle and creative acts can net excessive material destruction.[301]

c. Assassination

Assassinations, or executions, are an important tool in the covert-combat phase. They are intended to send a message by killing specific people. According to von der Heydte, "Executions are primarily directed against traitors or other recalcitrants in one's own ranks."[302] Traitors can also be identified and targeted outside of the ranks of the irregular force, and "revolutionary tribunals" are often employed to legitimize executions.[303]

d. Raids

The final operational act characteristic of the Covert Combat phase is the raid. Raids are short duration surprise attacks against enemy installations, intended to destroy and/or capture material, and followed by a planned withdrawal.[304] Raids also often inflict a psychological wound on the enemy and motivate others to aid the cause of the guerrilla.[305]

Von der Heydte also offered insight into third-party support, leadership, communication, and reconnaissance during the covert-combat phase. He cited American diplomat and author Charles W. Thayer to summarize the qualities required of a leader in irregular warfare. In addition to traits associated with regular military commanders, certain political and civil skills are required to facilitate population control. In-depth

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[300] Ibid., 193.

[301] Ibid., 157

[302] Ibid., 201

[303] Ibid., 201–202.

[304] Ibid., 205. This is similar to the definition of a raid as per Joint Publication 1–02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.

[305] Ibid., 207.

knowledge of terrain and an area's socio-economic factors is critical.[306] Irregular leaders must also remain as mobile as possible and process decisions with speed.[307]

3. The Transition to Open Combat

The final phase in von der Heydte's model is transition to open combat. This is when traditional battles occur while all the previously executed actions associated with the preparation and covert-combat phases simultaneously continue.[308] Each battle has a concrete purpose related to tactical and strategic gains. The notions of attack and defense become tangible, or real.[309] It is in this phase where the guerrilla steps "out of the dark" and is no longer anonymous.[310] International law becomes relevant again for the irregular force, but still faces challenges of application. For instance, the point at which guerrillas, with no association to a sovereign state, become legally accountable for their actions according to the Geneva Conventions is unclear.[311]

Von der Heydte distinguished battles in irregular warfare from those in regular warfare, stating, "The battle in irregular warfare is essentially a battle of light, independently operating units."[312] The irregular battle is characterized by employment of infantry weapons, a continued requirement for strict and anticipatory munitions planning, limited reinforcement capability, and the need to maximize use of terrain. Surprise remains essential during the transition phase.[313]

The goal of the transition phase is to isolate the enemy spatially, into what von der Heydte termed "islands."[314] Once this is accomplished, the transition to open combat is

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[306] Ibid., 165–166. Von der Heydte cited Charles W. Thayer, *Guerrillas und Partisanen. Wesen und Methodik dei irreulären Kriegführung*, Translated from English by Helmut Degner, München, 1964.

[307] Ibid., 168–169.

[308] Ibid., 219.

[309] Ibid., 218.

[310] Ibid., 223.

[311] Ibid., 232–235.

[312] Ibid., 226.

[313] Ibid., 227–229.

[314] Ibid., 230.

complete, at which point the guerrillas transform themselves into conventional armed forces and proceed to "politically and militarily liquidate the islands."[315] At this point, the force previously defined as irregular has transformed into a "large" conventional force; thus ending von der Heydte's irregular warfare analysis. Von der Heydte concluded his book by identifying irregular warfare counter-measures by phase, concentrating on intelligence, force dispositions, and psychology.

D. SUMMARY

In summary, Von der Heydte's *Modern Irregular Warfare* provided wide-ranging insight into irregular warfare application. It combined irregular warfare theory, historical examples, and prescriptive recommendations, but was distinguished by four key ideas:

1. Strong nations should consider the employment of irregular warfare and the employment of multiple types of warfare, sequentially or simultaneously.
2. An alternative to Mao's three-phase irregular warfare model exists, one that more adequately addresses irregular warfare preparation.
3. Terrorism is warfare and must be conceptualized as such.
4. New legal regulations are required to better address irregular warfare.

Von der Heydte's proposal for the employment of irregular warfare in combination with other forms of warfare is particular relevant today. As powerful nations find themselves increasingly frustrated by the tactics and strategies of lesser nations and stateless extremist groups, it is time to reevaluate response and prevention strategies. Combination warfare, characterized by a mix of irregular, nuclear, and/or conventional warfare, may hold real solutions.

Similarly, von der Heydte's elevation of terrorism from criminal act to warfare tactic is also important. Although it remains largely unaccepted, the employment of terror continues to occur, often with seemingly effective results. Rather than rush to slap the "terrorist label" on various groups, perhaps further strategic thought into the employment of terrorism (and counter-terrorism)—in military context—is called for.

[315] Ibid., 230.

Von der Heydte's book was cutting-edge for its time, and in many ways, remains so today. As an added bonus, the 1986 reprint of *Modern Irregular Warfare* included an interview with the author in which he discussed how various recent historical events of the time validated his previously published ideas. Considering current violent Russian aggression in the Ukraine, Chinese belligerence in the South China Sea, and radical Islamic groups' attacks in the West, it is apparent that irregular warfare is the global tool of choice. As such, von der Heydte remains surprisingly relevant today.

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VII. OTTO HEILBRUNN

Although often viewed in terms of large-scale, industrially driven, state-on-state conflict—think World Wars I and II—the twentieth century also witnessed many irregular warfare campaigns. World War II, in fact, was the first war in which "[t]he entire rear area was thus recognized as a theatre of war for sustained operations by soldiers and civilians"—a theatre tasked to partisans and Special Forces.[316] At the time, rear area activity included airborne operations, sabotage, supply to resistance movements, and general partisan warfare, but remarkably, "[n]o clear pattern evolved for the conduct of the war in the rear."[317] It was precisely this problem that attracted the interest of German author Otto Heilbrunn (1906–1969; Figure 9).[318]

Figure 9. Otto Heilbrunn

[316] Otto Heilbrunn, *Warfare In the Enemy's Rear* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), 24.

[317] Ibid., 28.

[318] Heilbrunn became a British subject shortly after World War II.

In 1954, following a life in academia and a stint as a United States assistant counsel at the Nuremberg trials, Heilbrunn began publishing books and articles geared toward partisan (guerrilla) warfare, terrorism, nuclear security, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, insurgency, the Soviet secret police, and Cold War military strategy. This chapter will specifically address Heilbrunn's ideas on partisan and anti-partisan warfare, air power and nuclear war in relation to partisan operations, and terrorism.

A. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Early on, Heilbrunn's writing focused on partisan and anti-partisan operations in the rear areas of regular armies, as exemplified by Russian partisan efforts against the German Wehrmacht in World War II (WWII). Coinciding with a rise in irregular warfare throughout Asia; namely Mao Tse-Tung's Chinese Communist revolution (1916–1949), the First Indochina War (1946–1954) and the U.S. Vietnam War (1965–1973); the term "partisan" lost traction to the more globally recognized "guerrilla." Heilbrunn's diction shifted accordingly.

Although he never formally defined the term "partisan," or "guerrilla," for that matter, Heilbrunn's work certainly projected a clear image of their shared meaning. Regardless, a short discussion of both terms is worthwhile.

The term "partisan" has its roots in eighteenth century Europe, when it was "used to designate a regular detachment leader employed in skirmishes… [who] was often also a military entrepreneur."[319] Later, during the Napoleonic Age, partisan equated with "freedom fighter."[320] By the twentieth century, partisan had evolved to include a wider connotation. Depending on the situation, a partisan could be understood as a guerrilla-style freedom fighter, patriot, or insurgent; as illegitimate by his enemies; as one who arises from rural populations; as a wager of "little war" or "peoples' war;" and as one who employs unconventional tactics while attacking the enemy where he is weak.[321] As

[319] Martin Rink, "The Partisan's Metamorphosis: From Freelance Military Entrepreneur to German Freedom Fighter, 1740–1815." *War In History* 17, no. 1 (2010): 6.

[320] Ibid.

[321] Ibid., 6–36.

previously stated, this Euro-centric term has since been almost completely phased out, in favor of the more broadly understood term, guerrilla. This author will attempt to mirror Heilbrunn's use of the two terms to the highest degree possible for the sake of academic clarity.[322]

B. MODELS FOR PARTISAN WARFARE

Heilbrunn evaluated partisan warfare broadly, a concept within which he proposed two distinct partisan models. The auxiliary model is characterized by partisans operating in support of a regular army "to contribute toward the defeat of the enemy by extending the war behind the enemy's front lines."[323] To do so, partisans employ assassinations, sabotage, raids, and ambushes. They also collect intelligence to facilitate army operations and disrupt communications and movement. All of these actions "create intolerable conditions for the enemy … and frustrate all their measures."[324] The auxiliary model was exemplified by Russian partisan operations against the German Wehrmacht from 1941–1945—a historic success not without precedent.

1. Auxiliary Partisans: the Russian Example

Russians have demonstrated a propensity for employing auxiliary partisan warfare. In 1812, Russian partisans famously decimated Napoleon's French army as it retreated westward following the invasion of Russia. Karl Marx, in an 1849 speech, emphasized,

> A nation, fighting for its liberty, ought not to adhere rigidly to the accepted rules of warfare. Mass uprisings, revolutionary methods, guerilla [sic] bands everywhere; such are the only means by which a small nation can hope to maintain itself against an adversary superior in numbers and

[322] It is clear from Heilbrunn's publications that he did not differentiate meaning between the two terms. The same is true of the terms anti-partisan and anti-guerrilla.

[323] Otto Heilbrunn, "Thinking about Guerrilla War: Terrorists, Guerrillas, and Regulars are Three Distinct Types of Opponents and an Opposing Commander Errs if He Attributes the Motivation and Modus Operandi of One to either of the Others," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 92, (1966): 39.

[324] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 89.

> equipment. By their use a weaker force can overcome its stronger and better-organized opponent.[325]

When German forces invaded his country in 1941, Joseph Stalin appealed to this history:

> This signifies that in our country front and rear constitute a single indivisible fighting camp… [t]he struggle of the enslaved peoples against the regime of the German-fascist highwaymen is beginning to assume general scope. Sabotage at war plants, the blowing up of German ammunition stores, the wrecking of German troop trains and the killing of German soldiers and officers have become everyday occurrences in all the occupied countries… swept by the flames of partisan warfare… [m]en and women guerillas—to intensify partisan warfare in the rear of the German invaders, destroy the enemy's communications and transport facilities, to destroy the headquarters and equipment of the enemy, and not to spare any cartridges against the oppressors of our motherland![326]

Notably, the Wehrmacht's Russian offensive represented one of the first times in history that there existed a front line of such length, stretching many hundreds of miles. This line required enormous in-depth support the farther it advanced, creating a rear area susceptible to Russian partisans.[327] Development of airlift and radio further aided the partisan effort by enabling resupply and direct communication between partisans and army units.

The Russian partisans were largely motivated by patriotism, which Heilbrunn considered essential to the auxiliary partisan model.[328] This patriotic response resulted from Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, but was significantly augmented by the

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[325] Cited in Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 19. The term "guerrilla" was previously spelled "guerilla," and as such, will appear in the latter form throughout quotations in this chapter.

[326] Joseph Stalin, *Order of the Day, No. 130*, (May 1, 1942) Retrieved from: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1942/05/01.htm.

[327] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 188–189. The German offensive into the Soviet Union, and later withdrawal, was severely affected by partisan activity, as confirmed by Joseph Goebbels on April 29, 1942: "[t]he danger of the partisans in the occupied areas continues to exist in unmitigated intensity. They have caused us great difficulties during the winter, and these by no means ceased with the beginning of spring." Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries*, trans. Louis P. Lochner (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), 195.

[328] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 16–17.

harsh treatment that the Germans inflicted upon the Russian population.[329] Partisan leadership further stoked the partisan flame with reminders of earlier successful efforts against Napoleon's army.[330]

2. The Independent Model: Mao's Guerrillas

Heilbrunn's second partisan model is the independent model. In this case, the partisans operate *sans* regular military forces, but typically benefit from external material support. Independent partisan warfare occurs in the form of revolution or insurgency and is predominantly motivated by discontent. The independent model has its own strategic goals, whereas auxiliary partisans simply support the strategic aims of the regular army.

Mao Tse-Tung's communist guerrilla revolution exemplified the independent model. Mao's Communists arose in opposition to the ruling Chinese nationalists, known as the Kuomintang, who employed counter-revolutionary terror tactics and conventional military operations in an attempt to crush the Communists.[331] For their sake, the Communists relied on the peasant masses by "recognizing and exploiting two things they had to offer: a reservoir of discontent… and a reservoir of labor."[332]

Although the Communists were primarily motivated by discontent, they were also inspired by patriotism.[333] Imperial Japan had invaded Chinese Manchuria in 1931, initiating years of Japanese oppression. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Kuomintang marginally lessened their resistance efforts against the Japanese—especially after a series of defeats—figuring that the United States would do their work for them. Conversely, the Communists used the Japanese aggression to galvanize greater

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[329] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 44.

[330] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 44.

[331] Lucien Bianco, *Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915–1949* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971), 77.

[332] Ibid., 77.

[333] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 16.

support. Therefore, motivation for Mao's Communists stemmed from both internally originating discontent and externally oriented patriotism.[334]

C. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGN

After motivation, partisan movements require an organizational design. This is primarily determined by whether the partisan movement fights in support of an army or independently. If the former, the partisan movement liaises with the Army, but remains subordinate. If the latter, the partisan movement may choose to infiltrate an existing organization, "as the Mau Mau leaders did by using the Kenya African Union."[335] Heilbrunn proposed seven organizational models, all of which are hierarchical in nature, with variations in political–military authority, chain-of-command structure, and degree of subordination to the army.[336] Like others though, he did not anticipate the future impact of networks as they relate to irregular warfare.

1. Political and Military Relationships

Political and military authorities dually influenced Russian partisan organization and command. Stalin and the Communist Party provided leadership, indoctrination, material, and spiritual support down to the local levels.[337] Simultaneously, "[e]very [partisan] detachment of some importance was in regular wireless contact with the General Staff of the Red Army from which it received instructions."[338] The Chinese Communist guerrillas, on the other hand, had only one chain of command, over which Mao presided. There was no conventional military to support or report through.

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[334] Ibid. Mao confirmed this throughout *On Guerrilla Warfare*. Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Translated by Samuel B. Griffith (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1961).

[335] Ibid., 23.

[336] Ibid., 26–29.

[337] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 66–68.

[338] Ibid., 81.

2. Strategizing According to Model

Heilbrunn reasoned that partisan strategy was also differentiated by model type. Independent movements, such as Mao's, have distinct strategic aims because they must eventually fight at the front in an effort to defeat the enemy on their own.[339] As such, the independents usually require outside support to achieve their aims.[340] Auxiliary movements lack strategic aims, but do have general objectives; namely, they strive "to deprive the enemy of reinforcements, arms, equipment, and supplies; to drain his manpower; and to give direct combat support to the front."[341]

Independent partisan movements' successes depend upon their ability to gain and retain operational initiative, destroy the initiative and will of their enemy, and win the over the population. They are aided in this by anti-partisan efforts to protect the population, which require dispersion of enemy forces and create stationary targets. Conversely, the guerrillas are not responsible for protecting anything and can blend into the population, which offers them the ultimate freedom of maneuver.[342]

In the Communist Chinese example, "[t]he nationalists, as the lawful government, had to assert their authority all over the country."[343] So, even though they began as a much larger force, their dispersion offered Mao's guerrillas, who were primarily located in China's northwest, an opportunity to surround and defeat pockets of Nationalists one at a time, in detail. Mao's guerrillas retained initiative, gained strength, and weakened the morale of the increasingly defensive-minded and static Nationalists, who became passive. The Communists proved over time that the Nationalists could not protect the population, whereas Mao's guerrillas worked hard to do just that—psychologically and physically. If executed properly by the guerrillas, these victories build momentum that is hard to overcome.[344]

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[339] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 39.

[340] Ibid., 48.

[341] Otto Heilbrunn, *Warfare In the Enemy's Rear* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963) 110.

[342] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 99.

[343] Ibid., 56.

[344] Ibid., 53–59.

Auxiliary movements must achieve their objectives through a combination of intelligence gathering and operational acts in support of the regular army. In the case of the Russian partisans, they served as both fighting units and as an intelligence agency for the Red Army.[345] They facilitated the Red Army's initial retreat by harassing the German rear. Then, they later helped spearhead its offensive into Germany by providing intelligence regarding weak points, or gaps, in the German front. This enabled army forces to mass on these weak points to achieve quick and decisive penetrations.[346] One task in particular, in which the Russian partisans excelled, was assisting the Red Army in river crossings by securing bridging material and seizing bridges at specified times.[347]

D. MODELS FOR COOPERATIVE ACTION

Rarely have partisans decisively determined the outcome of war in their own right. Even independent partisan movements typically require some form of external assistance, whether that be safe haven, supplies, training, or otherwise.

1. Auxiliary Partisans and the Regular Army

Partisan-regular army cooperation in the auxiliary model is necessary because it prevents counter-productive actions, by either element, and enables the partisans to lighten the tasks of the regulars.[348] Heilbrunn estimated that:

> [t]he practical forms of co-operation, apart from sending supplies, may be summarized as follows: 1. Liaison officers and agents may be sent to allied partisans … 2. Army officers may train guerillas … 3. Army officers may take command of [guerrilla] detachments … 4. Army officers may form or take command of the entire [guerrilla] movement … 5. An army unit may co-operate with partisans: (a) *In special assignments* … (b) *In battle* … (c) *In Campaigns* … .[349]

All the above forms of cooperation remain applicable today.

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[345] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 179.

[346] Ibid., 179, 188.

[347] Otto Heilbrunn, *Warfare In the Enemy's Rear* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), 107.

[348] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 113–114.

[349] Ibid.

Heilbrunn delineated two methods for intelligence cooperation. Either the partisans collect intelligence and pass it to the army, or the army embeds intelligence officers into the partisan movement.[350] In both cases, success hinges on partisan subordination to the army and the advanced preparation of partisan movements to minimize susceptibility to the enemy.[351]

Heilbrunn saw a particularly complementary relationship between special operations forces (SOF) and partisans. Similar to U.S. SOF operations in Afghanistan, he noted the inherent ability of SOF to "stiffen partisan resistance and do the precision work, but partisans are needed for mass output. " Furthermore, the partisans would be expected to maintain long duration presence after SOF were required to move onto other trouble areas.[352] Heilbrunn's preconditions for infiltrating SOF for partisan link-up were: the selected terrain supports guerrilla warfare; the population is capable of supporting the guerrilla force; the population is willing to fight and serve under foreign military leadership; capable and reliable indigenous leadership is not available, thus establishing the requirement for foreign leadership in the form of SOF; the presence of SOF will not create rifts in the guerrilla movement; and the movement can be kept under control.[353] The above precondition that requires SOF leadership in the absence of effective foreign leadership implies that the SOF presence must be enduring until such leadership is established and proven. This point will remain critical to current and future U.S. SOF relationships with foreign partner forces and must be taken into consideration when considering these strategic relationships.

2. Air Power

Heilbrunn also studied the relationship between partisans and air power. In particular, he drew conclusions based on cooperation between Filipinos and the American Air Force in WWII, the Soviet air force and its corresponding partisan movement, also in

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[350] Ibid., 113.

[351] Ibid., 115–117.

[352] Ibid., 121.

[353] Otto Heilbrunn, *Warfare In the Enemy's Rear* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), 104.

WWII, and the post-WWII guerrilla theaters of operation in Greece, Malaya, Indo-China, Cyprus, and Algeria. He assessed aerial fire support and supply to be the two priority ways in which air power could contribute to partisan warfare.[354] In each case, the embedding of liaison officers enhanced operational effectiveness.[355]

Air power is more likely to be used decisively in anti-partisan operations as opposed to in support of partisans, due to the nature of the partisans' comparative lack of air assets. On the topic of air power, Heilbrunn concluded, "that the pattern for use of air-power in anti-guerrilla warfare has been set, and that no great changes can be expected in the future." New technologies such as drones, satellites, and cyber, however, now challenge this assertion.

3. Issues in Nuclear War

In the prospect of nuclear war, Heilbrunn foresaw specific partisan roles. He believed that partisans would not be susceptible to nuclear attack because they were too small a target and typically operated behind enemy lines. However, he determined they could contribute in such a war by preventing an enemy's employment of nuclear weapons or by facilitating favorable conditions for the use of nuclear weapons on the part of their own side.[356] In the former case, partisans could also prevent an enemy's exploitation following nuclear weapon employment. In the latter case, partisan forces could influence the enemy either to concentrate or disperse his troops based on strategic intent.[357]

E. ANTI-PARTISAN OPERATIONS

In his study of Russian partisans, Heilbrunn made extensive observations regarding the German anti-partisan response. The German Sicherheitsdienst (SD), the intelligence branch of the SS, was responsible for securing the German army rear, while the Wehrmacht was responsible for fighting on the front lines. This policy failed for three reasons. First, the SD did not have enough people and resources to properly secure the

[354] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 123.

[355] Ibid., 124.

[356] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 141.

[357] Otto Heilbrunn, *Warfare In the Enemy's Rear* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), 206.

vast rear areas of the Wehrmacht as it drove into the Soviet Union. Second, the partisans avoided the strength of the Army, its front lines, thereby making most anti-partisan efforts irrelevant. And third, the guidance from Germany's senior leadership to relentlessly liquidate all partisans and partisan supporters led to brutal anti-partisan measures that served as a recruiting tool for the partisan cause.[358] To the last point, Dixon and Heilbrunn added, "[a]nd had they [the Germans] allowed themselves to be dictated by reason and clemency rather than by hate and terror, they might not have had to fight the partisans on more than a moderate scale."[359] This was especially true in the Ukraine.

Dixon and Heilbrunn credited certain German commanders with correcting their early anti-partisan mistakes. Namely, they point out that commander and chief of the German 11th army, Erich von Manstein, established an "anti-partisan" staff, headed by an operational officer, "to direct the partisan combat from a central point in order to co-ordinate and make fullest use of information we gathered, in the same way as the partisans on their part must have had some hidden central direction."[360] Overall though, the German SD and Wehrmacht personnel on the ground were provided little tactical and operational guidance for combating the partisans, for which Heilbrunn and Dixon concluded, "[o]ur Army [the British] needs a field manual for anti-guerilla warfare now."[361]

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[358] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 102–103. "German senior leadership, including Hitler and Himmler, ordered a policy of terror, not against Bolshevism, but rather against the larger Russian civilian population—a fact that would work against the German war effort." Ibid., 168–169. "In many cases, German counter-guerilla operations turned into civilian mass-slaughters and destruction of whole villages. Not surprisingly, this fed the appetite of those who bore witness to seek revenge, and the partisan movement provided a perfect means for doing so." Ibid., 164–165.

[359] Ibid., 112.

[360] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 113–114.

[361] Ibid., 131. Although it came late in the war (1944), the Germans eventually issued a *Manual on Warfare against [Guerrilla] Bands for all Services of the Armed Forces*. Ibid., 148. This manual acknowledged that, "[t]he attitude of the population is of great importance in the fight against the [guerrilla] bands . . . [t]he administration has to see to it, by just treatment, planned and energetic government, and thorough and purposeful enlightenment, that the population is brought into the right relation to ourselves." Ibid., 163.

1. Leadership

Effective anti-guerrilla leaders require a strong grasp of intelligence collection, policing techniques for the defense, and military operations for the offense.[362] The combination of intelligence and policing enables the identification and separation of the guerrilla from the population. Because guerrillas depend on the population and are usually of the population, "[t]he art of defeating the guerillas is therefore the art of turning the populace against them."[363] To do this, the anti-guerrilla must intimately know and understand the population, which takes time. Thus, "[the guerrilla's] chances of successfully forming a movement gradually decrease the longer a vigilant enemy has been in occupation."[364]

2. Demoralization and Incentive to Surrender

Heilbrunn elaborated on anti-guerrilla tactics by arguing that the population must be protected against the guerrillas, converted away from guerrilla propaganda, and any hostile population must be isolated.[365] Likewise, he argued that the guerrillas must be demoralized and denied access to supplies, recruits, and territory. They must be incentivized to surrender, which is one reason to limit harsh treatment of detainees.[366] One way to protect the population from the guerrillas is to enlist the population in home defense forces—a tactic employed with some success by the United States military in Iraq and Afghanistan, employing the Sons of Iraq and the Afghan Local Police, respectively. This provides the local population with work, some form of payment, and naturally pits them against the guerrilla movement.[367]

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[362] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 149. From this point forward, the terms partisan and guerrilla will be used much more interchangeably in accordance with Heilbrunn's own writing. In general though, he associated partisan with the Russian example and guerrilla with all other examples.

[363] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 34.

[364] Ibid., 34.

[365] Ibid., 36.

[366] Ibid., 37.

[367] Ibid., 153.

3. Counter-Offensive Operations

Heilbrunn determined that the anti-partisan has his choice of three primary offensive operations: the employment of commandos, the employment of pseudo-gangs, and encirclement.

a. Commandos

The Germans successfully experimented with commando units in WWII. These Jagdkommandos, as they were known, were small groups of highly trained fighters that hunted the partisans on their own turf, employing surprise, stealth, and aggression.[368] They saw to it "that the bands [partisans] never got rest."[369] The United States employed a similar concept in both Afghanistan and Iraq—helicopter mobile commando strike forces.

b. Pseudo-Gangs

Pseudo-gangs are another tool available to the anti-partisan. The Germans used pseudo-gangs effectively against Russian partisans. These gangs, "masqueraded as bands and their purpose was to check on the morale of the population and make contact with bands."[370] Thus, they served as an intelligence and targeting tool. In other pseudo-gang examples, such as in Kenya when the British fought against the Mau Maus, the pseudo-gangs would go so far as to infiltrate the enemy, then capture or kill him when he least expected it.[371] This more aggressive technique, however, risks sensitizing the enemy to the threat, thus limiting its long-term effectiveness.

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[368] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 160.

[369] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 68.

[370] Ibid., 69.

[371] Ibid., 69–70. For a more thorough and authoritative study of pseudo-gang operations, see: Lawrence E. Cline, *Pseudo Operations and Counterinsurgency: Lessons from Other Countries* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2005).

c. Encirclement

Finally, Heilbrunn advocated the encirclement technique to eliminate partisan movements. The Germans documented encirclement in their anti-partisan manual, which explained, "the basic maxim of this technique is to cut off every escape route and then systematically to annihilate all parts of the band."[372] Of course, encirclement may require significant numbers of anti-partisans. An alternative technique is available, known as the "surprise hunt and attack." This entails surprising the guerrillas, forcing them to fight, and then pursuing and exploiting those who attempt to flee.[373]

Heilbrunn concluded his anti-partisan research with the following general rules (emphasis added):

> 1) Fight a short war. Do not give the enemy time to gain strength and superiority;
>
> 2) **Attack first the enemy's strongest points. Go for his bases**;
>
> 3) The major objective is not to hold a front line or a defense line of forts but to annihilate the enemy's fighting strength;
>
> 4) **Do not hold more ground than you can afford to. If your forces are insufficient to seal up the enemy, establish base areas**;
>
> 5) Do not give the enemy the chance to encircle you;
>
> 6) **Keep up the offensive spirit among your troops**;
>
> 7) Surprise is a main element of successful anti-guerilla tactics. Use your air force to achieve surprise and to increase the profitable deployment of your troops;
>
> 8) **Penetrate the enemy by forming pseudo-gangs**;
>
> 9) Isolate the enemy by denying him access to the population and cutting his supply lines;
>
> 10) Improve your communications;
>
> 11) Keep your static defenses to a minimum. The friendly population will provide Home Guards for self-defense. In hostile areas guard troops are only required in order to prevent supplies from reaching the enemy. If necessary the population must be resettled;

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[372] Ibid., 71.

[373] Ibid., 103.

> 12) Do not treat the population and guerilla prisoners harshly. Reprisals should be taken against the population only if it is protected but still helps the partisans.[374]

In light of recent U.S. experiences, the highlighted points deserve special emphasis. Clearly, U.S. success in Afghanistan would increase with an improved ability to target the Taliban base in Pakistan. In Iraq, ISIS has proven that Iraqi Army forces were over-extended and lacking in offensive, or even defensive spirit, as we see from Mosul and Ramadi. Lastly, pseudo-gangs present an important offensive option in both Iraq and Afghanistan that has yet to be fully explored or operationalized.

F. THE EFFICACY OF TERRORISM

Heilbrunn preceded Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte's discussion of terrorism with one of his own. Heilbrunn viewed terrorism as one of three forms of guerrilla warfare, the other two being the guerrilla proper (those associated with the romanticized image of guerrillas) and the guerrilla regular (those who have evolved into more formalized units almost resembling regular forces).[375] In this context, terrorists aim, "to destroy the government's authority and its capacity to govern … [by creating] a state of disorder and lawlessness and [to] force the government to resign or yield to their demands."[376] Terrorists employ murder, kidnap, ambush, bombings, and threats, but refrain from attempting to control areas or tie down enemy troops.[377]

Heilbrunn asserted that terrorists only win if they begin with overwhelming popular support for their cause and methods. Otherwise, they risk alienating the population through use of their tactics. Terrorists must operate in cities to fully discredit the government's ability to protect its population, destroy its prestige, and attract world public attention that is likely to draw international support. Heilbrunn warned that if the

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[374] Ibid., 169–170.

[375] Otto Heilbrunn, "Thinking about Guerrilla War: Terrorists, Guerrillas, and Regulars are Three Distinct Types of Opponents and an Opposing Commander Errs if He Attributes the Motivation and Modus Operandi of One to either of the Others," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 92, (1966): 37–38.

[376] Ibid., 38.

[377] Ibid., 38.

necessary pre-conditions for a terrorism-based insurgency exist, then it is highly unlikely that counter-insurgency forces can win.[378]

To counter terrorism, Heilbrunn recommended employing cordon-and-search, operations, direct military action, and counter-terrorism. Each presents its own unique challenges, however. Cordon-and-search capability depends on having sufficient targeting information prior to the operation. Direct military action requires sustained dominance of an area over time, and counter-terror requires precise execution to limit negative reaction from the general population that eventually becomes counter-productive.[379] Later, Heilbrunn revised his counter-terror assessment by arguing that police work is the sole solution—a notion that is very relevant to today's discourse on counter-terrorism.[380] The recent rise of international non-state actors (NSAs) that rely heavily on terrorism as a tactic—Al Qaeda, for example—further highlights Heilbrunn's points.

G. SUMMARY

Heilbrunn's work addressed irregular warfare extensively, with a particular focus on rear-area exploitation—a concept that appears timely with the current expansion of ISIS-controlled territory in the Middle East. His ideas on partisan warfare, its relationship to air power and nuclear war, and terrorism as a form of guerrilla warfare are equally important. Heilbrunn provided a framework for waging partisan warfare, based on auxiliary and independent models, and his rules for countering partisan threats—mined from key figures and episodes in military history—are worth revisiting today.

Heilbrunn's observations on pseudo-gangs are of especial interest. According to Heilbrunn, "[i]f pseudo-gangs can possibly be formed, they must be formed, in every

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[378] Otto Heilbrunn, "When the Counter-Insurgents Cannot Win," *Royal United Service Institution Journal* 114, no. 653 (March 1969): 55–56.

[379] Ibid., 56.

[380] Otto Heilbrunn, "Thinking about Guerrilla War: Terrorists, Guerrillas, and Regulars are Three Distinct Types of Opponents and an Opposing Commander Errs if He Attributes the Motivation and Modus Operandi of One to either of the Others," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 92, (1966): 39.

anti-guerilla war."[381] Pseudo-gangs present a low-risk, high-reward solution for dismantling any number of global violent, extremist groups. Similarly, it is time to acknowledge that the military will not always be the main effort in combatting such groups. What is needed is increased emphasis on cooperative police work, both domestically and internationally. The latter will require enhanced network development between U.S. police organizations and those of foreign allies.

Heilbrunn warned, "[i]t is a grave mistake to allow the Communists everywhere to monopolize the guerilla movements."[382] For prudence' sake, the United States and its allies must also retain the option of irregular war. As Heilbrunn observed,

> … there is no doubt that in any future war, in which the U.S.S.R. or Red China are involved, the Communist Party in the opposing countries will organize guerilla movements for the fight against the armies of their own countries. Together with the Soviet guerillas behind our battle line, they form the Communist Sixth Column.[383]

This pattern has played out time and again, most recently with Russia in the Ukraine, suggesting that it is never too early to consider defensive measures. Heilbrunn declared over half a century ago that, "guerilla movements play a part in modern wars regardless of whether they are national or revolutionary, nuclear or conventional, global or localized."[384] His ideas still hold true.

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[381] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 167.

[382] Aubrey C. Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, *Communist Guerilla Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), 69.

[383] Ibid., xv.

[384] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 14.

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VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Germans have demonstrated remarkable expertise in irregular warfare—an expertise that is overshadowed, however, by their more conspicuous conventional feats. In World War I, German *Sturmtruppen* perfected new methods for trench-line assaults, since adopted by the U.S. Army and others. World War II witnessed German advances in maneuver warfare that earned the telling label, *blitzkrieg*. In that same war, the Germans pioneered flexible defensive techniques and executed an audacious, first-of-its-kind, airborne invasion on a scale that has yet to be repeated. Recent U.S. Army modular brigade design, implemented under the leadership of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, also has German roots. Finally, the most cited and referenced "conventional" military theorist remains Prussian officer Carl von Clausewitz.

The German irregular-warfare tradition is less recognized than its conventional counter-part, but equally as impressive. Clausewitz, in fact, argued that "people's war" should be incorporated into the accepted conceptualization of war, not just viewed as banditry, not only because it offers the state a useful martial tool, but conversely, it presents a legitimate threat, as Napoleon discovered. Clausewitz's chapter on people's war in *On War* serves as a lesson for powerful nations that may be inclined to revert to regular warfare solutions when facing irregular threats. It has been shown that large formations, binding legal guidelines, and industry-driven technologies are counter-productive against insurgencies that often "spread like fire in the heather."[385]

The fledgling U.S. Continental Army famously commissioned Prussian-born Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben to provide formal drill instruction. But it was a Hessian officer, Johann Ewald, who appreciated the Americans for their unconventional skills. As a jäger commander, Ewald established enduring counter-insurgency principles, fighting without excess and adapting to his environment. Most importantly, he respected and befriended the locals—all lessons that still apply in the insurgency fight today.

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[385] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Trans. O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 459.

In a peripheral campaign of World War I, Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck distracted and drained British resources in the comparatively insignificant theater of German East Africa. Von Lettow's exceptional leadership and network-management skills enabled the outnumbered Shutztruppe to fight directly, cede terrain, and still achieve strategic objectives. Von Lettow avoided defeat by frequently and dramatically adapting his strategy. With a nimbleness enabled by his proximity to the fight, he thrived by employing an irregular concept of operations—one quite dissimilar to the trench warfare that dominated the European continent.[386] Von Lettow's imaginative opportunism led to a sustained cross-border raid into Portuguese East Africa, thus extending and rejuvenating the life of the Schutztruppe. Current irregular warfare threats may necessitate a similar level of strategic flexibility.

Otto Skorzeny, "commando extraordinaire," rivaled the German conventional military achievements of World War II. This daring adventurer demonstrated how small, well-planned commando actions could net high strategic results. The rescue of Mussolini and seizure of the Hungarian Burgberg both singlehandedly shored up vital German alliances, thereby bolstering the German defense. Skorzeny's success depended upon subtle, yet effective techniques for mitigating risk, plus his ability to strike where the enemy felt comfortable. Skorzeny's commando raids, as they would today, required precise intelligence, specially trained and equipped units, and sufficient political will to authorize execution. Of the three, political will tends to be the most challenging to obtain.

Another German officer of World War II, Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte, led the costly, but successful, airborne invasion of Crete. Years later, von der Heydte published *Modern Irregular Warfare*, in which he articulated a theory of irregular warfare that called for a more advanced—or in some ways more primitive—concept of war. He emphasized irregular warfare as a strategic option for the strong and as complementary to regular and nuclear warfare. Von der Heydte's irregular-warfare model rivaled that of Mao Tse-Tung, but with broader application. He also helped develop early strategic thought on the employment of terrorism, while advancing the idea of

[386] John Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), 147.

combination-type warfare, characterized by the sequencing and synergizing of irregular, nuclear, and/or conventional warfare.

Finally, German academic (turned British citizen and author) Otto Heilbrunn systematically analyzed the subset of irregular warfare known as partisan, or guerrilla warfare, and provided a prescriptive guide for attacking an enemy's rear, as well as recommendations for countering the same. Heilbrunn's dual model for partisan warfare remains pertinent in classifying and understanding the subject, as are his ideas on partisan activity in combination with air power and nuclear war.

Heilbrunn's most significant contributions were his examination of pseudo-gang operations and identification of methods for combating terrorism. In his discussion of pseudo-gangs as a tool for countering irregular threats, Heilbrunn concluded, "if pseudo-gangs can possibly be formed, they must be formed, in every anti-guerilla war."[387] Heilbrunn also identified how and where terrorism works as a tactic, and shows that policing is the best counter-terrorism method.

Heilbrunn wrote in the context of the Cold War, when the threat of nuclear weapons trumped all others. Over half a century later, we have yet to experience nuclear war, but the world has seen increased irregular conflicts and threats. Recent examples include Russian actions in the Ukraine, global Al Qaeda operations, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the Middle East and beyond, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram in East and West Africa, Abu Sayyaf in Asia, Hezbollah and Hamas in Lebanon and Israel, and many more. Notably, the United States also faces developing threats from within its own borders. In view of all that we have gleaned from the Germans, perhaps it is time to seek German irregular-warfare guidance as well.

[387] Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 167.

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